The Journal of Historical Review

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—Review—

The Occult Roots of Nazism

VOLUME ELEVEN, NUMBER ONE SPRING 1991

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INSTITUTE FOR HISTORICAL REVIEW

The Journal of Historical Review

VOLUME ELEVEN, NUMBER 1/SPRING 1991

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The Journal of Historical Review is published quarterly by the Institute for Historical Review, P.O. Box 1306, Torrance, California 90505. Subscriptions include the *IHR Newsletter*, containing news of interest to academic and lay Historical Revisionists, which is issued in alternate months of issue of *The Journal of Historical Review* except August. Combined subscription price is $40 per year, $65 for two years and $90 for three years. Add $10 per year for foreign subsciptions. Add $20 per year for overseas airmail delivery. Remittances for subscriptions must be payable in U.S. dollars drawable on a U.S. bank. Quantity subscription and bulk issue rates are available on request. Issues of *The Journal of Historical Review*, from 1985 to the present, are available for purchase. Please write for our backlist and prices. Appropriate, double-spaced manuscripts are welcomed by the editor, and must be accompanied by return postage.

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Member:
Conference of Historical Journals

ISSN: 0195-6752

Institute for Historical Review
P.O. Box 1306
Torrance, California 90505

Erratum:

Please note these corrections of errors in the Winter 1990-1991 issue of the *Journal*. On Page 449, lines ten and eleven, the sentence should conclude ". . . or to keep open the Library of Congress." On page 492, line 14, the word "guys" should read "guides."

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Two copies of each reprint must be submitted to the publisher of *The Journal of Historical Review*.

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From the Editor

This issue of *The Journal*, the forty-first since publication was begun in 1980, opens Volume XI with a long-sought contribution: Pulitzer-Prize winning historian John Toland's autobiographical remarks to IHR's Tenth Conference at Washington, D.C. last fall. IHR had sought out the best-selling author as a speaker for several years after the appearance of his *Infamy: Pearl Harbor and Its Aftermath*, Toland's Revisionist study of the cover-up by successive American presidential administrations, Congress, and the military (late IHR editorial adviser Pearcy L. Greaves played a key role in leading Toland through the maze of available proceedings and evidence from the nine official "investigations" by the government, on which Greaves was the pre-eminent expert).

Persistence pays, for here John Toland outlines the extraordinary story of how an intelligent, educated young American of literary bent, with a pronounced sympathy for the underdog that found its first reflection in a youthful affinity for Communism, grew into a marvelous historian dedicated to showing "how it actually was" in the experience and memory of historical participants, on all levels and all sides of the mighty happenings he investigates and chronicles. Toland's road to a broadly Revisionist perspective on the twentieth century's great wars and their actual origins, you will see, was marked by no Damascene crisis, but by his taking the pains to seek out, talk and listen to, and even befriend men and women whom Toland's colleagues in the literary establishment, peering into the dark and silent glass of their own enlightened prejudices, could view only as ogres. We eagerly await the appearance of the autobiography which he and his lovely wife and collaborator Toshiko are presently writing.

In the previous issue we promised further analysis of Jean-Claude Pressac's gigantic and unintentionally revealing attempt to substantiate homicidal gassings at Auschwitz by publishing a wealth of documents, photographs, sketches, and plans hitherto unavailable to all but the small number of researchers who have had access to the archives at the Auschwitz State Museum and other Polish institutions. Who better to help Revisionism profit from Pressac's Gargantuan

continued on page 66

Living History

(From remarks presented to the Tenth International Revisionist Conference, October 1990)

JOHN TOLAND

What am I? I've been called everything from an extreme liberal to an ultra-conservative. I am neither. I have been labeled a "Nazi" because of my numerous interviews with Hitler's adjutants, secretaries, doctors, and military leaders, both SS and Wehrmacht. I loved the remark the Soviets made in 1976 about me being "the leading Western running-dog, lacky historian." I would have put it on my stationery, if I bothered to have stationery. On the other hand, the People's Republic of China has published five of my books.

I fell for Communism when I was a young man, like so many others in those days who were idealistic and thought a lot about the world and people. We were attracted by the humanitarianism in Communism, and we were innocent. By being with those people, I learned more about Communism, and saw how they distorted the truth. For example, when Hitler invaded the Soviet Union, we were called in and told that we were no longer the American peace mobilizers, but were now part of a united front against the peace campaign. "The hell you say," I replied. "I'm still against the war." I was criticized for that, but after the Japanese attack against Pearl Harbor, I changed. I went down and enlisted in the air force.

Well, what am I? God knows! I belong to no school of history. I'm not a conventional historian, but primarily a teller of tales without thesis. I deal with history's human side, portraying history through the experiences of participants of all ranks. I write what I call living history.

My new publisher, William Morrow, asked me to explain why my latest book is different from other histories of the Korean War. This was my answer:

> I regard history as the stream of life, touching base with man's most vile attributes and ascending to his most noble qualities: evoking passions, turmoil and violent change, as it pushes its relentless and unpredictable way forward. I have no thesis. I start each book of war as a fresh subject, wiping out all previous conjectures in an attempt to achieve objectivity.

Once, after I had just returned from Germany, where I had been researching my biography of Hitler, I was given an award in Connecticut, for *The Rising Sun*. The speaker that evening was Barbara Tuchman, who was under the impression that I was a Nazi. Noticing my wife, Toshiko, Tuchman came up to me and said, "I see that you've been Japanized." I replied, "Yes, and it's about time."

She then asked me why I was writing about Hitler, and I said: "I think that he was the greatest mover and shaker of our century. He changed all of our lives, and I'm going to try to tell the objective story of Hitler." She then said to me: "Toland, nobody is objective." And I replied, "Speak for yourself, Barbara."

As a matter of fact, I liked her work, and I have never criticized her books. I just couldn't understand why she thought I was a Nazi. Was it just because important Nazis visited me at our home?

One of them was Hitler's SS adjutant, Richard Schulze-Kossens. I interviewed him in his home in Germany, and I got great stuff from him. He visited our house three times on lengthy stays – he was always bringing me new information. I would invite my friends over to meet these Nazis, whom they also found to be human beings. Much of my information came from people who still believed in Hitler. But why should I have relied only on Germans who were against Hitler? In fact, I just couldn't trust those Germans who said after the war, "I never liked Adolf Hitler!"

As a playwright who has written twenty unproduced plays, I look upon each of my histories as a drama. I strive to let the contestants on all sides act freely, uninhibited by my own conclusions. I simply observe them and try to make some meaning out of the drama. I take no sides and I treat all the actors equally, regardless of nationality. I try to understand the motivations of those involved, regardless of rank or status.

This is "living history." I tell it as it happens, without giving any hints or foreshadowings of how the drama will end. To

accomplish this, I must first spend many months reading other histories and accounts, and working in archives and libraries. Then I start mass-interviewing. I will go anywhere to get a good story, to get as close to the truth as possible. I must go to the places where the battles were fought, where critical conferences were held. I've got to learn what the characters were wearing, what the weather was, what they thought—everything in order to gain insight. And that is living history.

My concept of living history had its beginnings when I was fourteen years old. My father was a singer, a fine baritone, and my mother was an artist. All our friends were writers, dramatists, artists, and so forth. I had no idea what bankers or businessmen were like, and by the age of twelve I had decided to be a writer.

When I was fourteen a man named Porter Emerson Browne came to live with us. Porter had been a very successful playwright, but when his wife died he'd become an alcoholic. (My father, like most Irish, was sure he could cure anything.) Within a week, Porter was my idol. He was a little fat guy with false teeth, which he used to take out of his mouth and twirl as he talked to me. He once taught me to cheat at cards while twirling his false teeth. (He told me that if I was going to be a writer, I would have to know how to cheat, so that I wouldn't be cheated by others.)

Porter's most famous play was *The Bad Man*, a very successful comedy. It ran on Broadway for two years and was made into a motion picture with Wallace Beery. It was about Pancho Villa. But the *Bad Man* was not a "bad man"—he was really a good man.

I asked Porter why his play was such a success, and he replied: "I rode with Pancho Villa for two years. I knew him. I knew that he was a great patriot. I wanted to write a play about him and I knew that if I wrote a serious play, no one would take it seriously. So I decided to present him in this way so that for the first time the real truth about Pancho Villa could be understood by the average American, who was convinced that he was simply a criminal." Well, this touched me, and I wanted to do the same thing. Porter Browne began to teach me about playwrighting.

He stayed with us for two years. And before he left, he told me: "John, there's one thing that I must imprint in your mind—never forget, no matter what you write: don't tell it,

show it." I've been showing it ever since. In other words, most historians talk about and describe everything as if it were not even part of life. I use my playwrighting experience to show it from an objective point of view, to bring it to life. And because I interview so many people, I have sometimes been severely criticized.

While I was doing research on the dirigible, *Hindenburg*, I interviewed ten people who had survived the disastrous fire and crash. Do you think any of them will ever forget that day? Do you think that anyone who was in any of those great battles of World War II will ever forget what happened to them? Nowadays, of course, everybody goes around with a tape recorder and interviews people, but when I first began writing, they didn't realize this.

When I graduated from high school I was in no shape to go to college. So I worked in the Norwalk Tire Factory in order to go to Phillips Exeter Academy to learn how to study. Best thing I ever did. From there I went to Williams College, a wonderful school. It was very conservative, but they had two or three left-wing professors so you could hear both sides of every issue.

They also had a system whereby if you received a certain mark by your junior year, you could go into honors work, working with one teacher. I strove to do my best, and as a result my marks were high enough that I had two honors work teachers. One French, with whom I did French literature and drama, and the other was a delightful fellow in English who taught me playwrighting.

While going to school, I managed, my senior year, the Williams Christian Association Book Store. After finding out what books the professors would be assigning in their classes, I would send my spies to two competing book stores, where they would buy up all the books for a third of the price that I sold them for. As a result, by graduation day in 1936 I had made more than $5,000 – which was big money in those days.

That day a guy from Esso corporation [now Exxon] came up. The man who owned Barnes & Noble (a Williams man) had told him about me. So the man from Esso told me that he wanted me to begin as a junior executive with a very good starting salary. My first assignment would be in the South Pacific. I told him that I was honored by his offer, but that I would be going to the Yale Drama School because I was going

to be a playwright. He looked at me and said, "What a waste of talent!" He didn't realize that I made money so I could write—it wasn't for the desire of making money. Otherwise, I might have eventually become head of Exxon. Wouldn't that be terrible?

I didn't want to go back home, so I went to New York. I packed a knapsack and went riding freight trains. I loved it, and I had a marvelous time. You meet a better class of people riding freight trains. The first time I went to California I hitchhiked. But hitchhikers are a low breed. On the way I saw a freight train loaded with guys sitting on top, all waving to me to get on. They ranged in age from about 12 to 16 years, all young farmers. They were wonderful people, guys you could trust, and they taught me how to ride freight trains. So for the next three years I had a wonderful time seeing the best part of America.

Traveling like that, you take along water and newspapers, which you use as blankets. You usually go with three guys. The older fellow would guard our bindles. (We were called bindlestiffs in those days.) Another guy would set off and hit all the bakeries for day-old bread and meat ends. The third guy would be the star of the show. He would hit up people for ten or fifteen cents, which would last us until the next stop.

I was Phi Beta Kappa, and that became my job. By studying how it was done, I became a terrific panhandler. I didn't whine or anything like that. But I knew how to pick 'em. If a guy looks prosperous, leave him alone. I'd stay away from neighborhoods where the lawns are cut clean and neat. People there don't like panhandlers. But where lawns are neglected, and there are dogs and children, they'll help you. And if you're really desperate, go to the very poor. They will always give you something to eat.

All this taught me so much, and I wrote all about it. The concept of seeing human beings—observing them and seeing how they act and interact, not caring about their religion or rank or anything, but letting them act, instead of forcing them to do something they don't do—I found this fascinating.

By the time I was 41 I had written thirty-five plays—none produced; hundreds of unsold short stories and four unpublished novels. Two years later I had published a dozen factual articles and my book on dirigibles, *Ships in the Sky.* Then I visited Washington to research a book on the

depression. The Army was wonderfully helpful—they gave me so much material. Well, that afternoon, I was called by Ted Clifton, who later became John Kennedy's right-hand man. He told me that he had read my book on dirigibles, and liked the way I treated enlisted personnel. He said that he wanted me to do the same for the GI. He turned over to me all the materials about the Battle of the Bulge that the historians were working on, and he said that he would send me over to the Seventh Army in Germany with orders, and that it wouldn't cost me anything. So I set off. I didn't know I was going to be a historian. I was just going to write a story.

I hated all Germans! Naturally, a good American should. And then I arrive in Germany, where General Bruce Clarke ordered people who had been in the Battle of the Bulge to meet and talk with me. Some of these fellows told me about their experiences with the Germans. Then, after a while, Bruce said, "Now I want you to really get to know the enemy."

General Hasso von Manteuffel was one of the main commanders in the battle. He was a famous German commander, and his great uncle had been a Prussian field marshal. Well, Clarke phoned him in Bonn where he represented the "lost" province of Prussia, and he said: "Manteuffel, Clarke here. I'm going to send an American up to see you, and I'd appreciate it if you would see him for the next five days."

So I went to the U.S. Embassy, where we met. Manteuffel was wearing civilian clothes, but he still looked like a soldier. He was only five foot, two inches, but he was a great athlete. I hated him. He was the most Prussian of Prussians. He looked at me, in my sloppy clothes, and so forth, and he hated me. Well, then we started in. As I went after him, I began to see that this man was honest. He was telling me the truth about his relations with Hitler. And he said to me, "Toland, you only want to know what happened!" And I said, "Yes." Well, then he really opened up and told me everything.

After we got to know each other better, he told me that he was planning to run for public office, and he asked me what I thought about a campaign poster that showed him in uniform. "Forget it," I said. "No one is going to vote for you now. You ought to go down to southern Germany and live and enjoy youself." " But," he said, "they tell me I'll win." "You won't," I replied. Well, he didn't. Instead, he went south and enjoyed

life, and we remained fast friends for the next twenty years. He was also my conduit to former Wehrmacht people because, he said, I could be trusted.

Then I heard from an American about a man named Otto Skorzeny, an Austrian who became famous by rescuing Mussolini in a commando operation. This American had been a GI where the Malmedy massacre [during the Battle of the Bulge] took place. He and a dozen other Americans were stuck during the battle in a hotel, and thought they were going to be killed. Then one night this big face looked down at them and said, "You are now my prisoners."

It was Skorzeny, who commanded a special regiment of German soldiers dressed as American GIs. He took those Americans prisoner and thereby saved them. The former GI said that Skorzeny now lives in Madrid, and he asked if I would like to talk to him. I said, "You're talking about 'Scarface,' the guy that was going to kill Eisenhower, a criminal whom you say saved your lives?" In those days, everyone was trying to find Skorzeny, but this former GI was ready to direct me to him.

So I went down to Spain and found him in two hours! I met this huge man, like a mountain, who had a big scar. Wow! I had to tell him that I was John Toland, and that I was going to write a book about the Battle of the Bulge. And he replied, "I've been waiting for you."

Well, he took me home, cooked me dinner, and we had a marvelous time. I could see what a marvelous, historical artifact I had found. He loved Hitler! He wasn't like those other characters who talked about how terrible Hitler had been. Skorzeny offered to put me in touch with former SS men living in South America and elsewhere, people like former Belgian SS commander Leon Degrelle. "Fine," I replied, I'll listen to anybody." And so he became my conduit to the SS.

I had all these things going for me, and the book itself was a success. You know, we really screwed up in the Battle of the Bulge, but people love to see us screw up, because we always come out ahead in the last minute of play.

After talking to people like Skorzeny, my perspective and thinking changed. I saw that the Germans had a point, too, and I presented them as human beings. Similarly, I never used pejorative adjectives. You know, it worked!

Fortunately, the people who loved my book, like the GIs who were there, and most of the army brass, wanted to know what

the enemy was really like. You see, when two peoples are fighting like this, do you know who the real enemy is? It's often behind them – the guys who are pushing them to fight. The poor birds who have to do the actual fighting have no concept of what is really going on.

I had never been west of Los Angeles, and so I decided to visit the Far East. With my new perspective on history, I decided to write about the first six months after the Pearl Harbor attack. I visited Pearl Harbor, Wake Island, Saipan, and the Philippines, and I learned about the Filipinos.

In the Philippines, I was seeing more Filipinos than Americans, because the Americans had stopped helping me. I complained, and as a result the American officer (who was like the "ugly American" character in the novel and motion picture of the same name) asked me if I wanted to meet President Garcia. After hearing my story, President Garcia told a young fellow, Major Ramos, "I want him taken all over the Philippines." Imagine that! Here I was, a nobody, and I didn't have to pay a cent. I was taken all over. For example, within an hour after landing at Cebu, a young man told me that former President Osmaña wanted to see me the next morning.

Well, Osmaña was dying when I saw him, and he said to me: "I must tell you the secret that [former president Manuel] Quezon told us never to reveal about the so-called collaborationists." [That is, Filipino officials who cooperated with the Japanese occupation authorities during the war years]. He told me: "Just before Quezon left to go to America, he called together the six most prominent men in the Philippines, and he ordered them to pretend to collaborate with the Japanese in order to save the country." They were never to tell the story, and it caused a great sensation when it came out.

I got to meet the Aquinos, whom I've now known for years. I knew Mrs. Aquino [who is now the country's president] when she was a housewife. I never imagined that she would be head of anything. Her husband was the half-brother of my friend, Tony Aquino, who was a playboy. Tony was a wonderful guy, but his life was for pleasure. On the other hand, his younger brother was, at 26, governor of Pampanga. I met all these people, had a wonderful time, before going on to Hong Kong, Taiwan and, finally, Japan.

I hated the Japanese, of course, but after arriving in the country, I thought that I'd been had. While observing women clogging along the road with their kids, I thought to myself, "Are these the people I'm supposed to hate? I think I'm wrong."

Although I was a virtual nobody—I had written only two books—I arrived at the Sanyo Hotel for interviews with Japanese army and navy figures, the most important of whom was General Nara. He had brought along a copy of my book, *Battle: the Story of the Bulge*. He opened it to the biographical information about myself, and when his interpreter said that Nara wanted to tell me something that no officer should reveal, the general said: "You Williams, me Amherst. Must tell secret of Bataan." I said, "Back in three days, same place, good interpreter."

So, that evening I went to the press club and told my tale of woe to all the boys sitting around, and someone pointed to a very attractive young lady named Toshiko Matsumura, who was coming across the room to where we were. They said that she was a very good interpreter. After we met, she asked, "Mr. Toland, are you writing factual book or fiction?" She later often reminded me of my answer, which was: "Only the facts, girl!" At any rate, she liked the idea and offered to help me evenings when she wasn't working.

With her help I got a good story from General Nara. He told me about how he had ordered a colonel to carry out an attack against the American lines, which were protected on one side by a mountain, and on the other by water. The colonel took his troops over the mountain to get them to the rear. They had almost reached the top when they had to come back. The colonel asked General Nara to try again, but Nara refused. Nevertheless, they sneaked out and this time they made it. They got behind the Americans, and that's how they cracked the American line. I tell this story in honor of all those who were involved in this campaign.

Toshiko and I then went to see Admiral Genda, who had been in the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. He was now a general, and he headed the Japanese self defense forces. I became excited as he told me about the attack, and I began to feel like a Japanese participant in the campaign, which was wonderful.

After that, I talked with a flier who had taken part in the sinking of the *Prince of Wales*, a great British battleship. The

Japanese felt so terrible about sinking such a beautiful ship that the next day they flew out and dropped flowers over it! During those days, as I listened to all these things, I thought to myself that these are not the Japanese I had heard so much about. I told these stories in my book *But Not in Shame*, and I felt that I was beginning to get in touch. And all the time I was thinking of Porter Emerson Browne.

Another hero of mine was Edgar Snow, an editor of the *Saturday Evening Post*. He had gone to Asia to get the real story about China, which he told in his book, *Red Star Over China*. I was very glad to finally meet Snow in New York, through my Chinese friends. His book inspired me, and I also wanted to uncover suppressed truth. Instead of the usual bull that you get from the media, I wanted to find out what really happened. I didn't realize it at the time, but I was forming "living history."

The next book I wanted to write would be about the last one hundred days of the war in Europe. To research it, Toshiko and I spent about eight or nine months driving around in Europe. We toured 21 countries, including five countries behind the Iron Curtain.

We had incredible luck. In Hungary, for example, we got to know that country's most prominent opera singer, who was in charge of foreign travelers. He was a baritone like my father, and so we became friends right away. He warned Toshiko, "Please, madam, don't take so many pictures because the Soviets get very upset if you do that." He introduced us to Hungarian historians, who told us inside stories about the Soviets. After one such meeting, we found that our car had been broken into and that all of our photographs had been destroyed. However, we continued on our journey. Everywhere, we found people who helped us and provided useful information for my book. In Poland, we were given assistance everywhere.

Probably the most fantastic leg of our journey was in East Germany. This was in 1963, when Americans were not permitted to travel there. It said so in our passports. While we were in West Berlin, I interviewed an American journalist who had been born in Germany. He has been a young boy at the time of the bombing of Dresden in February 1945.

During this interview he made a passing reference to Dresden that moved me to ask if he had been there recently.

He begged me not to tell anybody, and I promised that I would keep the secret only if he would tell me how I could also get into the country. So he told me how, and he gave me a letter for a friend of his who was an official in the East German government. We crossed over, met the woman, and gave her the letter. I told her that I was working on a book about the final hundred days of the war from every side, and that we wanted to visit East Germany. She told me to return in four days, but not to tell anybody that I was coming. The night before we left, General Polk, the commanding general in West Berlin, had us over for dinner. When he asked what we would be doing the next day, I told him that we would be returning to West Germany.

Of course we crossed over the border instead, in our Volvo. We met with a young man in the foreign tourist agency who was a devoted Communist, and who was very glad that we wanted to learn about the German Democratic Republic. And so it was that we spent three of the most marvelous weeks of our lives going through East Germany, where we were given every possible help.

The only ones who tried to stop us were the Soviets. For example, Toshiko was always taking pictures of key bridges and buildings. While she did, our young Communist friend would talk to guards to distract them. On one occasion, we visited a location that I wanted to see in order to better tell the story of American prisoners of war. As we were coming down from the hill, where I had noticed that the ground was all torn up, we heard the wail of quickly approaching police sirens. Our young Communist friend told the police that he represented the government, that we were guests of the government, and so forth. (And he told Toshiko, "For God's sake, hide your camera!") So we got away free from there. When I later asked what the police had been so upset about, he told us that the location, of which Toshiko had taken many photos, was a military tank exercise ground.

How did we get back into West Germany? We were waved through a seldom-used crossing point by the West German border police, who assumed that a couple like us—one who looked like a Swede and the other Oriental—driving a Volvo with West German license plates for foreigners must be okay. We simply drove through, all the time smiling and waving.

The first man we interviewed after returning was Gero von Gaevernitz, who had worked with American OSS official Alan

Dulles. He had told us the story of how SS General Wolff had turned over all of the German troops in a famous operation [the German surrender in Italy], without any loss of life.

During our final meeting with von Gaevernitz, he said, "John, where did you come from? We got word from General Polk that you disappeared. What happened?" We told him that we had been in East Germany. He pretended that he wasn't in the CIA at that time, but we knew that he was. And he said to us, "East Germany? You know, you're in real trouble. You'll have to report to this office in the capital. There's no name on it, just a number. It's the CIA, and they'll handle this thing." Well, nothing ever happened to us. But I'm not going to tell you how we got away with it. You'll have to read our autobiography!

Our history books portray SS General Karl Wolff—whom I've mentioned—as a real swine. Even though he had willingly worked with von Gaevernitz and the Americans in the surrender, he was held prisoner in Stadelheim prison, near Munich. Well, I decided to meet with Wolff, even though no journalist had been permitted inside Stadelheim. I met this commandant, who spoke English, and I told him, "Sir, I want to see General Wolff." He replied, "You have three minutes." Well, I knew that the commandant would be interested in my story, so I told him all about it. As a result, I was there for almost three hours, and I got the whole story from Wolff, who explained why he had done what he did, for which he never got any credit.

Day after day, we had similar experiences in working on *The Last Hundred Days*, which became our first big bestseller. After that I decided to rewrite my experiences about Japan. I had only been there for six weeks, and I now felt that I knew nothing about the country. I wanted to dig deeper, and so I said to Toshiko, "Let's spend five or six years doing a book."

I went to my editor at Random House and I told him, "I've got a great idea. I'm going to write a book called *The Rising Sun*." He replied, "About Japan? But no one is interested in Japan." I said, "I don't give a damn. I'm going to write a book and if you want to publish it, all right." They reluctantly told me to go ahead. So after much research in the United States, we went to Japan, Okinawa, Iwo Jima, Saipan and Thailand, where we spent a year and a half. That was probably the most fruitful time of my life. Moreover, I was finally getting to

understand things and people.

I learned that Toshiko's father knew many key officials in Japan. The most important of these was Marquis Kido, the Privy Seal who had been the chief advisor to the emperor. He had also kept the so-called Kido diaries. Even though he had worked with the emperor for peace, he was sentenced to life imprisonment as a war criminal. And because the Americans had taken his diary and had defectively translated it, and would not pay attention to his corrections, he hated Americans. I told my father-in-law that I had to see him. So he phoned Kido who agreed to meet with me.

He was a short fellow, about five feet tall, but he had tremendous authority. For two days he seemed to look right through me as we talked. And then suddenly he said to me, "You only want to know what happened!" I said, "Yes, I only want to know what happened!" He responded, "Why didn't you tell me?" He then opened up and during the course of my six or seven interviews, we got to the heart of this whole story.

Whenever I interviewed someone, whether they were a president or a private, and regardless of nationality – I treated everyone the same – I routinely sent the material back for checking. Other authors I knew warned me that I was crazy to do this, and that I would lose every good story this way. In fact, I never lost a good story. In the case of Marquis Kido, for example, he sent us numerous pages. For one thing, I had got his religion wrong, his name wrong, and about ten other things like that. Most importantly, he explained that I had not understood what his special relationship with the emperor was. He then explained this in great detail, and told me many things he had not previously related.

The Germans were astounded by this practice of mine, which I followed in each case, no matter who the person was. The person was able to see that I could be trusted. The few things that people wanted removed were personal matters.

It took me a week to persuade Hitler's youngest secretary, Traudl Junge, to really agree to an interview. After several unproductive hours, her sister said to her in German, "Why don't you give it to him?" I wondered what she meant. Finally with a pleading look, I told her I would send back everything and she could check it. In her case, it came back as a thick manuscript about her personal relationship with Adolf Hitler – a gold mine. I had my interpreter make copies, and I returned her material before the time she had specified.

In the book's section about her, I included a portion telling how Hitler liked to arrange romances in the office. He had arranged a romance and a marriage with a young SS officer, for example. Well, she blew her top and wrote me a scathing letter. I replied by asking what she was kicking about. I told her that if she didn't want it, I would cut it out. So we cut that out. However, she never cut anything about Hitler.

I respect the right of whomever I interview, and I accurately relate what I'm told. As a result, I was trusted by both Nazis and anti-Nazis – they all knew that I knew everybody else. It's crazy, but I don't know anybody else who does this, and I don't understand why.

Well, I was very unhappy about what I'd written about Hitler in my two previous books. I regarded it as two-dimensional, and not the real Hitler. So I decided to write a book about him. After talking to my wife about this project, I spent six years working on the book. I returned to Germany, where I interviewed many people. Manteuffel and Skorzeny were very helpful.

Let me tell you about Otto Skorzeny. While working on *The Last Hundred Days*, we met with him in Spain, where he told us the marvelous story about Hungarian leader Horthy's secret deal with the Soviets to switch sides. Hitler found out about this and called in Skorzeny, who was his favorite trouble-shooter. He told him that he could have a regiment to take care of the situation in Hungary. Skorzeny replied, "Sir, I want one tank and 25 men. And I want a truck." So he went to Hungary and successfully carried out "Operation Mickey Mouse." (Horthy's son was called Miki.)

Skorzeny had been inspired by reading George Bernard Shaw's play *Caesar and Cleopatra*, in which Cleopatra (as a young girl) is stolen away from a kind of lighthouse by wrapping her in a carpet. So Skorzeny got a big rug and took it to young Horthy's apartment on Castle Hill, the huge government headquarters. After saying to him "Miki, I've got a present for you," he shot him in the arm, rolled him up in the rug, packed him in the truck, put him on a plane and sent him off to Hitler. Skorzeny then phoned Horthy and told him, "Your son's about to be sent to the Führer's headquarters. What would you like me to do with him?" Horthy said, "I never wanted him to do this, tell me what you want me to do." Skorzeny told him that he wanted his cooperation in taking over Castle Hill. And so with just one tank and 25 men,

Skorzeny took over the entire citadel within an hour. He was most proud of the fact that he had accomplished it without almost no deaths – he killed four Hungarians and lost two of his own men.

Otto Skorzeny also told me about his great friend Hans-Ulrich Rudel, who was one of the Führer's greatest heroes. He was a Stuka pilot who had sunk a Soviet battleship and destroyed more than 500 Soviet tanks. A superman. Skorzeny told me the story of how Rudel had lost one leg during the last hundred days, was grounded and told that he would never fly again. When Skorzeny heard that this great athlete had lost his leg, he was very unhappy and visited his friend. When he arrived, he heard strange thumping noises coming from Rudel's room. He opened the door and found Rudel banging his stump against the table. Otto shouted, "Oh God, don't do that!" Rudel said, "Hi Otto, how are you doing?" and Otto responded, "What the hell are you doing?" Rudel answered, "Getting my leg tough so I can go back in my Stuka. My mechanics are fixing it so that I can fly it with one leg." And do you know that this guy went back to his plane? Can you imagine the pull of diving like that, the pain? Hitler was furious when he heard, because he had ordered Rudel never to go up again. He regarded him almost as a son.

To get back to my story, Otto asked me if I had communicated with Rudel, who lived in Chile. After I told him that he would not answer my letters, Otto picked up the phone, reached Rudel in Chile, and told him "Toland says you're afraid to see him." Skorzeny then looked at me and said, "He'll be here tomorrow."

Otto told me more about his friend. "Do you know Rudel has become a champion skier? With one leg? And not only that, did you know that last year he went on a climb of the highest mountain in Chile? He went up with ten people and was abandoned, with no skis and one leg, and after three weeks he came down again?" This was a superman; I was eager to talk with him.

And that's how Otto, Toshiko and I found ourselves at the airport waiting for this man with one leg. All of a sudden we saw this youngish man running as if he had three legs. It was Rudel. Otto served as our translator. Even though he had a curious English that was entirely his own, we managed to get a terrific story from Rudel.

I later became very friendly with Rudel. You may know he was one of the leaders of the neo-Nazi group. I visited him and his beautiful new wife and their two-year-old child at his new home on the border of Austria and Germany. When he told us of all his ideas about changing Germany, I said, "Gee, why don't you just enjoy life." He simply said, "No. What can I do for you?" I told him about Hitler's air force adjutant, a snob who was the only Hitler adjutant I was not able to meet. So Rudel phoned this fellow and told him, "Rudel here. Toland is here and he's going to tell our story. You are going to see him." And that's how he got this air force snob to see me.

Meeting a man like Rudel was really something. For example, as he told me, at the end of the war he refused to let the enemy capture him. He flew directly to an American airfield in spite of their guns and so forth. Later, British airmen treated him chivalrously and were glad to shake the hand of the great Rudel. Doug Bader, a great British ace and his country's most popular airman, lost both legs during the war but flew with artificial limbs. He sent Rudel his first artificial leg.

After completing my biography of Hitler, I was disgusted with this whole subject, and I wanted to get away from it. What made Hitler do all these things? So I decided to look into the First World War, and I began to work on a book entitled *No Man's Land.*

In response to my book *The Rising Sun* I received many letters – mostly from naval officers – who told me that I was mistaken in writing that Roosevelt did not know in advance that the Japanese task force was on its way to attack Pearl Harbor. I received so many letters that I told Toshiko that I might have made a terrible mistake. I decided to write another book and find out if I had been wrong. Well, I went at it in my usual manner and within a year found out that I had been mistaken. Franklin Roosevelt did know. For example, after a two-year search I had located a certain Admiral Ranneft, a Dutchman. In late 1941 he had been a captain, and was serving as the Dutch naval attaché in Washington.

After we established contact, he wrote to me: "You might be interested in my story. Did you know that I was the one who brought the plan for the Bofors anti-aircraft guns to the U.S. Navy, and because of that they used to let me into the Navy secret intelligence office all the time? And on December 3,

1941, I went in there and they told me they had discovered two apparent carriers, obviously Japanese, heading towards the east. When I returned there on the afternoon of December 6, I asked where the two carriers were now. The commanding officer motioned to a man who went up to the board and pointed to an area two hundred miles from Pearl Harbor."

"Wow! That's a great story," I told Ranneft, "but I just can't just take your word for it. What about some documentation?" It's in my war diary," he replied. "You know, some of it burned up here, but I sent the rest to The Hague. Why don't you inquire there?"

Two weeks later, I received the entire December 1941 portion of his diary. Everything he told me was right there, proving that we knew that the Japanese were coming. By the way, that evidence has been pooh-poohed by those who can't believe it.

Another great lead: one evening a man phoned me to tell me that he had been the person who had located the Japanese force in the Pacific. He was just a young navy enlisted man at the time, but he was a brilliant electronics specialist and eventually became a millionaire because of his inventions. (For example, he invented the anchor that is used by all of our small craft. Everyone who has a yacht uses one.) So after listening to what he had to say, I said, "Fine. I'll come up to Maine and see you." After spending an entire day with him, I believed him. But I told I him that I would come back the next day with my wife. I returned with Toshiko, and after we spent another whole day with him, she said to me: "He's telling the truth."

Well, about six months later, he called up in a jovial mood and said, "Oh, John, I'm getting married! You know, I'm marrying a woman who owns almost all of California and she doesn't like publicity. Do you mind not using my name?" I said, "Okay, I'll call you Seaman Z." I then asked about the photographs he had given me of himself. "Oh, use the pictures," he said, because, you see, he really did want to be uncovered.

Well, when my book *Infamy* was published, the *Washington Post* claimed that I had invented "Seaman Z." About a year later he came out in the open and publicly confirmed what I had written, but this was not mentioned in the media.

The most important part of my book was my treatment of the various trials and investigations into the Pearl Harbor

affair. I was floundering because I had all this great stuff, but I was not able to put it all together. I was trying to support Captain Safford, the naval genius who realized that all his information had been destroyed. So he went to a Boston lawyer named Rugg, who was representing Admiral Kimmel, who was getting the blame for Pearl Harbor.

I was saved by a man named Percy Greaves. I had heard about this strange fellow up in Dobbs Ferry (New York), who had been collecting material about Pearl Harbor for years. After talking to him by phone, I went to see him. We got along well together, and I visited him dozens of times during the next six months. He allowed me free access to his dank, dark cellar, where he fed his dog and where he kept all this precious material. I owe a great deal of the quality of *Infamy* to Percy Greaves.

[Editor's note: Until his death in 1984, Greaves was a frequent contributor to *The Journal*, served as an IHR editorial adviser, and addressed the Third IHR Conference (1981). See the *JHR* issues of Fall 1982 (pp. 319-340), Winter 1983-84 (pp. 388-474), and Winter 1984 (pp. 444-445).]

Finally, I would like to tell you about the book we've been working on for the last three years. It's a history of the Korean War. We've done a great deal of research on this in Korea, Taiwan and China. Through our contacts, we were finally invited to China itself, and our visit there was one of the most important times of our lives.

When we arrived in Beijing in late April 1989, the Chinese historians I had been in touch with were very excited because the students were organizing a revolt. They were protesting against the corruption of the fat cats in power, and were receiving tremendous public support.

Well, on the fourth of May, we were interviewing a young lieutenant colonel from the People's Liberation Army who had written a book about the Korean war. Unfortunately, I got nothing from him because he would not let me tape him and he refused to answer any of my tough questions. When we went out for lunch, we saw this great flood of students coming back from the first demonstration at Tienanmen Square. It was most exciting. When we returned to the young lieutenant colonel after lunch, he was very excited and said, "I'm going to bring my old professor to see you. He was the first to write about the Korean War. He was a top commissar there. Maybe he will be willing to tell you about it."

Two days later he introduced us to this large man. Dressed in a dark Mao uniform, he looked like a bear. When we sat down, I asked him if I could tape him, and he said, "Yes. I'm not going to tell you about my book. I'm going to tell you things I couldn't put in my book." He then began revealing all this marvelous information. Toshiko asked him if she could take his picture, and he readily agreed. He put a big arm around me for a picture that we could use for publicity if we wanted. All this was a great breakthrough.

John and Toshiko Toland

The next day we were invited to lecture on living history at the Academy of Military Science. It turned out that the entire staff had read my books, five of which have been published in China. Our lecture was very well received. Afterwards, the commanding general allowed us to take his picture. And then they opened up this archival material to us, which told what the Korean War was like, what Mao was like, and so forth.

The media horribly misrepresented the Chinese students' revolt. This was only a limited revolt against corruption by the top officials, but the TV circus turned it into a demonstration

for democracy, which they did not understand at all. Their older professors told them "You have won. Now leave Tienanmen Square." But no, they were told to put up a kind of statue of liberty, and the media turned the thing into a tragedy. No one has written the truth about what really happened. The young Chinese were doing something very Chinese. It was not like we all saw on television, and turning it into a Western thing corrupted the spirit of the entire campaign.

Fortunately, we managed to get out of China with all our material, and as soon as we got out, the doors closed again.

After writing seven histories of war in the twentieth century, I've come to a number of conclusions. It is human nature that repeats itself, not history. In fact, we often learn more about the past from the present, than the reverse. I have also discovered that a vile man can occasionally tell the truth, and a noble man can tell a lie. And that men don't make history as often as history makes men. That the course of history is not only unpredictable, but inevitable. Finally, I've learned that the writing of history can never be definitive.

I have tried to approach history as a non-partisan, ignoring nationality and ideology, and to portray the horrors of war through the sufferings of ordinary people as well as in the imaginations of the mighty. Throughout it all, I have tried, in my obsessive search for reality, to present living history, human history, with subjective objectivity.

Auschwitz: Technique & Operation of the Gas Chambers

Or,

Improvised Gas Chambers & Casual Gassings at Auschwitz & Birkenau, According to J.C. Pressac (1989)

Part I

ROBERT FAURISSON
Translated by T.J. O'Keefe

Jean-Claude Pressac's massive study of the homicidal gas chambers of Auschwitz and Birkenau appeared two years ago. Had it actually presented the slightest proof for the existence of the alleged gas chambers, media throughout the entire world would have resounded with the news. But instead of an uproar, there has been silence. The explanation for this silence lies in the fact that the author, far from presenting the expected proof, has unintentionally proved that the Revisionists were correct to conclude from their own researches that the gas chambers were only mythical. As will be seen, the Pressac book is a calamity for the Exterminationists, a windfall for the Revisionists.

Since 1978, there have been innumerable books, documents, and films supposed to prove, once and for all, the reality of the Hitlerian gas chambers. For their part, the professors and researchers, who made the rounds from conferences on the "Holocaust" to colloquia on the "Shoah," promised us that, on this subject, we were about to hear the last word. But when all was said and done, nothing surfaced in fulfillment of the expectations which had been created. Nothing. Ever.

Nevertheless, the appearance of these books, documents, and films as well as the staging of the conferences and colloquia was usually accompanied by an ephemeral media brouhaha or the appearance of intellectual ferment, as if

something new had actually been produced. The fever fell rapidly, but for some days at least the illusion of an event had been created.

Nothing of the sort with Pressac's book. This time the silence was shattering. A single journalist remarked upon the book: Richard Bernstein, whose article appeared in the *New York Times* of December 18, 1989 (section C, p. 11, 14). The title of this article and the photograph taken from Pressac to illustrate it are indicative of the reporter's confusion. The headline reads: "A New Book Is Said to Refute Revisionist View of Holocaust."

The photograph shows a wooden door with a metal frame and, in the center, a peephole; moreover, one sees chalked on the door German and Russian words. The *Times* caption reads:

> A photograph of a gas chamber door from the book "Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers." A warning written on the door after the camp's liberation reads "Attention! Danger! No entry!"

The journalist is honest enough to stress that the writing on the door stems from after the war but doesn't reveal to the reader that this photograph is presented by Pressac himself in the chapter on gas chambers... for *disinfection* (p. 50). Truth to tell, the unfortunate journalist could have found none better: among the hundreds of photographs and documents in this tedious tome, it is impossible to find *a single one* which could be decently presented as proof of the existence of a single gas chamber.

In a different edition of the *New York Times* published on the same date, an identical article (Section B, p. 1, 4) appeared under a different title: "Auschwitz: A Doubter Verifies the Horror."

This time, Bernstein chose a photograph of a blueprint of a crematorium and a photograph of prisoners carrying their shoes after showering. The first photograph comes from page 141 of the book, on which the blueprint is said to concern a crematorium *without a homicidal gas chamber*. The second photograph is taken from page 80, where the naked men are said to be prisoners who, with their shoes in hand, are leaving the shower room for the "drying room; clean side," both rooms in a large installation for showering and disinfection.

The content of this article would bear reproduction in full for its author's circumspection regarding Pressac. And, as we've seen, none of the three photographs supports the thesis of an extermination in gas chambers.

In France there has been brief mention, here and there, of the Pressac book, with the air of a drowning man's last grasp at a straw. In this regard, the case of Pierre Vidal-Naquet is heart-rending. This professor has, in recent years, championed two authors whom he counted on to answer the Revisionists: Arno Mayer and Jean-Claude Pressac or, as he described them, an American Jewish historian "teaching at the very elitist Princeton University" and a Frenchman, "suburban pharmacist, trained in and practicing chemistry" (Arno Mayer, *La "Solution finale" dans l'histoire*, Preface by Pierre Vidal-Naquet, La Découverte, 1990, p. viii). His colleague and friend Arno Mayer has just done him a nasty turn by writing:

> Sources for the study of the gas chambers are at once rare and unreliable. (English original text: *Why Did the Heavens Not Darken?: The "Final Solution" in History*, New York, Pantheon, 1988, p. 362).

Which led Pierre Vidal-Naquet to write:

> Nobody at all, from now on—I mean after Jean-Claude Pressac's book—will be able any longer to speak, regarding the gas chambers of Auschwitz, like Mayer of "rare and unreliable" sources. (French edition, p. ix)

But what Vidal-Naquet prefers to ignore is that Pressac, too, has unintentionally made a fool of him (see below, p. 43, note 2).

Neither Arno Mayer nor Jean-Claude Pressac has succeeded in discovering the slightest proof of the existence of homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz or at Birkenau.

An Author and a Book That Are Concealed from Us

So, J.C. Pressac is a pharmacist. He practices in the Parisian suburbs, at La Ville de Bois (Essonne). Around 1979-1980, he first offered his services to the Revisionists, who ended up in dismissing him; about 1981-1982, he besieged Georges Wellers, director of *Le Monde Juif*, who finally sent him on his way; then he presented his services to the Klarsfelds, who still use him today, but in an odd manner. Serge and Beate Klarsfeld have not published his book in its original French version, but in an English translation in America. It is unobtainable from the indicated address: The Beate Klarsfeld

Foundation, 515 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10002. One might say that this odd work has been placed under lock and key, in a few tabernacles, and is accessible only to a handful of the elect. In January 1990 I was able to obtain a copy by chance.

In October 1990, during my trip to Washington, I visited those two sanctuaries of international research, the Library of Congress and the National Archive and, out of simple curiosity, asked to see the book. Impossible: it was, to be sure, listed in the general catalogue, but oddly absent from the shelves, with no one able to explain its absence.

When Pressac, who has a burning desire to speak on the radio and at conferences, makes an appearance, one has the feeling that his handlers are attempting either to cut him short or to keep him altogether silent. Thus he was recently forbidden to speak at an anti-Revisionist colloquium organized at Lyon by the Union of Jewish Students of France and the Council of Representatives of Jewish Institutions of France; a journalist wrote: "[J. C. Pressac], who was present, could not even present his work yesterday, and he took it badly" (*Lyon Matin*, April 24, 1990, p. 7).

His friends have good reasons for confining him to a minor role; they know that, as soon as Pressac opens his mouth, they must fear the worst for their own cause: the whole world could then become aware that the unfortunate pharmacist suffers grave difficulties in expressing himself, that he advocates a horribly confused thesis and that he takes a real joy in making blunders.

A Windfall for the Revisionists

I will consider Pressac's book at some length for the following reasons:

1) The work is absurd to the point of zaniness and on that ground constitutes a historical and literary curiosity which the historian has no right to ignore; the author's mental fragility, combined with his taste for cooking his data, for padding his figures, for strewing sand in his critics' eyes and for making assertions without evidence provides a treat in itself for the connoisseur of eccentricity;

2) The thesis defended by Pressac illustrates the state of decomposition into which the theory of the extermination of the Jews has fallen; according to our pharmacist, one can no longer maintain, as did the judges at Nuremberg and the authorities at the Auschwitz State Museum, that the Germans

deliberately built vast gas chambers, veritable factories for gassing at Auschwitz, which functioned impeccably for years; for Pressac, the Germans tinkered with innocent rooms to transform them, for better or worse, into homicidal gas chambers (in the case of two large crematoria) and carried out improvised and episodic gassings (in the case of two other crematoria); in short, to use expressions I've heard many times from the mouth of our subject, at Auschwitz and at Birkenau there was a good deal of "improvisation" and "casual gassing": these words sum up Pressac's book in its entirety;

3) This voluminous compilation is like a mountain which gave birth to a mouse, and the mouse is Revisionist; indeed, the little of substance which one draws from reading Pressac fully confirms that the Revisionists were—and are—right;

4) For the first time, an Exterminationist agrees, apparently at least, to a debate with Revisionists on terrain dear to them: that of scientific and technical argumentation; the opportunity to demonstrate the impotence of the Exterminationists on this terrain as well is too good to be missed.

A Deceptive Title

Pressac has chosen a deceptive title for his book. He devotes not a single chapter to *homicidal* gas chambers and even less to the "technique" or to the "operation" of such chambers. He never stops asserting that these chambers existed, but nowhere does he demonstrate this. Often I've done the following: opening the book to a half-dozen different pages, I've invited people to confirm that each time, without exception, either there's no question of homicidal gas chambers, or the *question of the homicidal gas chambers is conflated with something different*; or finally, according to the author himself, it's a matter not of "proof" but of "clues" and "traces" of the gas chambers. Chapters are allotted to Zyklon B, to delousing installations, to the *Zentral Sauna* (a large complex of showers and disinfection equipment located at Birkenau), to crematoria, to testimonies, to the Revisionists, to the town of Auschwitz and to the private life of J.C. Pressac. There are treatments in detail, invariably confused, of faucets, of plumbing, of ventilation, of stairs, of masonry, of heating, and even fairly intimate personal revelations, all in the worst disorder and in a style never anything but baffling. On the gas chambers described as *homicidal*, however, one finds *not a single chapter nor even so much as a single autonomous*

treatment which can be detached for a second from the whole for study on its own.

Pressac wishes to deceive us utterly; or more specifically, to mistake showers, disinfection gas chambers, and morgues for homicidal gas chambers.

Scribbler's Methods: Disinfection Gas Chambers or Homicidal Gas Chambers?

Pressac in no way respects his book's plan. The disorder is general. The book swarms with needless repetitions. The technical discussions are disjointed. The book's title justified one in expecting a technical treatment, thoroughly documented, of the "murder weapon."

Since, according to the author, at Auschwitz and at Birkenau there was a considerable number of disinfection gas chambers (p. 550) and because such chambers could not, for obvious physical reasons, be used for killing people, how is a homicidal gas chamber to be distinguished from a disinfection gas chamber?

Since, according to the author, in one document (p. 28) the words *Gaskammer* (gas chamber), *Gastür* or *gasdichte Tür* (gas-tight door), *Rahmen* (frame), *Spion* (peephole) are all employed for a disinfection gassing, how are the words *gasdichte Tür* alone suddenly able, in another document, to supply proof of a homicidal gassing?

Doesn't one risk, at every moment, believing he's discovered a homicidal gas chamber where, in reality, the German document speaks only of a disinfection gas chamber?

Left with no criterion, without the least direction, we are condemned, from the opening pages of this utterly disorganized book, to doubt, to uncertainty, to the worst errors, and all that while wandering through a maze of heterogeneous reflections by the author.

I awaited with curiosity Pressac's response to these elementary questions. Not merely did he fail to give us answers, but he confessed his own embarrassment and, as we shall see, he devised a pitiful technical explanation to extract himself from the mess. Here is what he has written:

> Since the homicidal and delousing gas chambers using Zyclon-B [*sic*] had been installed and equipped according to the same principle, they had identical gas-tight doors fabricated in the same workshops [at Auschwitz]. Confusion [...] was

> inevitable, since at this time it was not known how to distinguish between the two types of gas chamber. [...]. The only difference is in the gas-tight doors: there is a hemispherical grid protecting the peephole on the interior of the doors of homicidal gas chambers.

The author returns to this subject on page 49 and above all on page 50, as if there he had a technical proof, a material proof of the existence of the famous homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz. This apparent proof is based on two photographs of poor quality. On the left is the exterior of a gas-tight door with a peephole and, on the right, the interior side of this same door with a peephole protected by a hemispherical grid. It is this grid which makes the difference between the door of a homicidal gas chamber and the door of a disinfection gas chamber: it protects the peephole; thanks to it, the victims could not break the glass through which the SS were watching them! On page 50, Pressac is not so affirmative; he writes that this protective grid "makes it reasonable to conclude a homicidal use." But, nearly 200 pages later, he reproduces the two photos again, but with a different caption; this time, more boldly, he states plainly that it concerns (indisputably) "a gas-tight door from a homicidal gas chamber (as can be seen by the heavy hemispherical grill protecting the inspection peephole on the inside)" (p. 232). There one sees a characteristic example of Pressac's inability to put his thoughts in order, of his endless repetitions, of his mania for passing from hypothetical statement to pure affirmation on the same subject. The reader's confusion grows when, another couple of hundred pages further, he discovers a photograph of a wooden door with the following caption:

> An almost intact gas-tight door found in the ruins of the western part of Krematorium V [...]. *This door has no peephole* [emphasis in the original] even though it was used for homicidal gassings (p. 425).

But how does Pressac know that this door was used [*sic*] for such gassings?

The Pressacian confusion probably reaches its height when, at the end of the book, the photograph of a small brick building at Stutthof-Danzig is presented to us in these terms:

> [...] This chamber, originally used for delousing effects, was later used as a homicidal gassing chamber. This mixed usage is an extreme example of the confusion created over a period of thirty years and more by the difficulty of distinguishing

> between, or the deliberate refusal to distinguish between, disinfection and homicidal gas chambers (p. 541).

In the end the reader is unable to understand what, for Pressac, constitutes the physical characteristics of a homicidal gas chamber at Auschwitz, or of even a mere gas chamber door at the camp. It is the author who, according to his whim, decides to class as homicidal this chamber or that door, which in fact could have been entirely innocent.

But, to return to the grill which so preoccupies him, our pharmacist ought to have consulted an expert in disinfection gas chambers and asked him, for example, the following question: didn't the grill simply protect either the extremity of a device to measure the temperature of the chamber, or a cylinder for chemically testing the density of the gas? (See *The Leuchter Report* [David Clark, P.O. Box 726, Decatur, Alabama 35602], 1989, p. 16, column C, and J.C. Pressac himself, "Les Carences et Incohérences du Rapport Leuchter," *Jour J, La lettre télégraphique juive*, December 1988, p. viii, where there is mention of the "thermometer" of a disinfection gas chamber at Majdanek.)

The confusion between disinfection gassings and homicidal gassings continues with the business of the trucks which left Auschwitz to pick up Zyklon-B at the factory in Dessau, a city south of Berlin. Pressac cites "movement authorizations," of which Revisionists are perfectly aware (p. 188). In my *Réponse à Pierre Vidal-Naquet* (La Vieille Taupe, 2nd ed., 1982, p. 40), I reproduced the text of a radio message dated July 22, 1942, signed by General Glücks and addressed to the Auschwitz concentration camp:

> By this [radio message] I authorize a round-trip journey from Auschwitz to Dessau by 5-ton truck in order to pick up gas intended for gassing the camp to combat the epidemic that has broken out.

The German words are "Gas für Vergasung": gas for gassing. Here, and in two other documents of the same type, it is expressly a question of gassing for disinfection (July 22 and 29, 1942 as well as January 7, 1943). In the meantime, on August 26 and October 2, 1942, two other documents of the same sort speak of "material for special treatment" and "material for the transport of the Jews." There Pressac sees proof that, *both times*, what is meant is gas for *killing* the Jews! This is no proof at all. As the general context (three other texts of the same sort) demonstrates, the gas was for disinfecting clothing or rooms

on account of the arrival of the Jews who had been deported. The term "special treatment" (*Sonderbehandlung*) here designates transport (*Transportierung*) of the Jews (*Réponse à Vidal-Naquet, op. cit.*, p. 24). The more people arrived at Auschwitz, which functioned as a turntable for redistributing a large number of deportees to other camps after a quarantine period, the more necessary was Zyklon-B.

The Six Gassing Locations According to Establishment History and to Pressac

These six places are, first, *Krematorium I* or *Krema I* (also called *Altes Krematorium* [Old Crematorium]), located in the main camp of Auschwitz and visited by innumerable tourists (it is presented as if in its original state); then, located at Birkenau, *Bunkers I* and *II* (their location is not very certain); *Krematoria* or *Kremas II* and *III* (in ruins which can be investigated) and *Kremas IV* and *V* (of which there remain only traces).

According to Pressac, *Krema I* was planned with criminal intent and the homicidal gassings in the crematorium constitute an "established fact." But he offers only assertions unsupported by any arguments, any documents, and, in the 38 pages he devotes to this building (pp. 123-160), he is content essentially to report *testimonies* of gassings rather than proof. These testimonies, to which I shall return, leave one absolutely unsatisfied. He recalls, following the Revisionists, how after the liberation of the camp the Poles altered and disguised this crematorium so better to convince visitors of the existence of a homicidal gas chamber. The tricks were many. It was, for example, to conceal some of them that the Poles, Pressac tells us, covered the roof with "roofing felt" (p. 133). The loveliest of these ruses, discovered by the Revisionists and reiterated by Pressac (p. 147), is the pretended door for victims entering the gas chamber; in reality, this door was constructed much later by the Germans to give access to the air-raid shelter into which the structure had been converted. In short, for Pressac, what the tourists visit today is to be considered an "authentic symbol of homicidal gassings at Auschwitz" (p. 133), which is to say an imaginary representation, because, here, a symbol is not a reality and an "authentic symbol" is still further from reality.

In the conclusion to this section, he plays a real sleight-of-hand trick. He appeals to the Leuchter Report as the material proof—the only one—of the reality of homicidal gassings in that place. He says that Fred Leuchter, whose qualifications he cites, removed seven samples of brick and cement and that upon analysis six of them revealed the presence of cyanide; then he writes in bold-face type:

> **These results, virtually all (6 out of 7) positive, prove the use [of] hydrocyanic acid in the "Leichenhalle" of *Krematorium I*, hence its use as a homicidal gas chamber.**

Pressac omits stating that Leuchter:

—came to exactly the opposite conclusion: for Leuchter, a gas chamber did not exist and could not exist there;

—based his findings on physical inspection;

—reinforced this finding with chemical analyses entrusted to an American laboratory; these analyses revealed that, in the alleged homicidal gas chamber, the amount of ferric-ferro-cyanide was either zero or infinitesimal by comparison with samples from a disinfection gas chamber (recognized as such by the authorities of the camp museum), which had quantities of ferric-ferro-cyanide equal to 1050 mg per kilo, that is, at least 133 times that of the quantities found in the alleged homicidal gas chambers.

I shall return later to the Leuchter Report and the use to which Leuchter puts it.[1] Let us note for the moment that our author exploits the report and the chemical analyses it contains to his own profit. Georges Wellers does the same (see "A propos du 'rapport Leuchter' et les [*sic*] chambres à gaz d'Auschwitz," *Le Monde Juif*, April-June 1989, p. 45-53), judging that "the results of the chemical analyses were obtained by a very competent and conscientious specialist [Fred Leuchter]" but that "his understanding of the problem posed is minimal" (*ibid.*, p. 48). Vidal-Naquet thus took advantage of general credulity when, before an assembly of students of the Lycée Henri IV, in Paris, on September 24, 1990, he stated regarding the Leuchter Report:

> This is a grotesque document which proves nothing. Wellers and Pressac have expressed what is to be thought of it.

Let it be added that Pressac states that Leuchter was "commissioned" by the Revisionists, thus implying that these had been beaten at their own game and that the American

engineer had cruelly deceived his "silent partners." Leuchter, however, has in fact demonstrated that the Revisionists were correct. Furthermore, he functioned in a completely independent spirit, as a man who had up to then believed in the reality of the German homicidal gas chambers

Since Pressac admits that the Poles drastically altered the site, it is incumbent on him to study the question of gassing in the alleged gas chamber *as it originally was before all alterations, according to the plans which he presents to us, plans which I had discovered in 1976, published in 1980, and for which he is indebted to me.* However, he hasn't done so because then he would have to admit the obvious: vast gassing operations, right beside the oven rooms and twenty meters from the SS hospital, would have resulted in a general catastrophe.

The premises could have been disinfected with Zyklon B, as suited a storage place where in particular corpses of those who had died from typhus were piled; whence, doubtless, the infinitesimal traces of ferric-ferro-cyanide.

Neither Gerald Reitlinger nor Raul Hilberg nor Pierre Vidal-Naquet seems to believe that there was a gas chamber there; as for Olga Wormser-Migot, she stated expressly in her dissertation that Auschwitz I had *no* (homicidal) gas chamber (*Le Système concentrationnaire nazi (1933-1945)*, PUF, 1968, p. 157).

Pressac is thus perhaps the last believer in the "homicidal gas chamber of *Krematorium I.*" At least publicly, for I recall that in private, in the company of Pierre Guillaume and me, he ridiculed the idea.

As for *Bunker 1*, he admits that in the last analysis even the physical site is unknown to us (p. 163). He adds that no one has either physical traces or an original plan (p. 165). As for the mass graves which were supposedly alongside this bunker and whose odor was allegedly unendurable, he considers them to be a product of the imaginations of the "eyewitnesses" and the odor in question to have arisen from decantation basins for sewage (p. 51, 161).

Regarding *Bunker 2*, there is no more evidence. Pressac believes he's found traces of this house but he furnishes only "testimonies" that he himself considers implausible; these testimonies are sometimes accompanied by drawings; in addition there are vague area plans owing to a Soviet commission (p. 171-182).

The factual balance established by Pressac up to this point is pitiful, if one considers that a good portion of the history of homicidal gassings at Auschwitz is founded on the *certitude* that the Germans carried out massive gassings at these three places (*Krema I, Bunker 1, Bunker 2*). This certitude, which one sees today as based on no evidence, has invaded the history books and the court dockets: goodly numbers of Germans have been convicted of the alleged gassings in *Krema I*, in *Bunker 1* and in *Bunker 2*.

. *Krema II* is supposed to have been planned WITHOUT a homicidal gas chamber (p. 200). It is here that the Pressac thesis differs totally from the traditional thesis. According to him, the Germans transformed a harmless, half-underground morgue (*Leichenkeller 1*) into a homicidal gas chamber. To that end they improvised, but without modifying the ventilation; this is supposed to have remained in conformance with that of a morgue, evacuating contaminated air at the bottom; that would have contradicted the ventilation of a hydrocyanic gas chamber, in which the warm air and the gas would have necessitated removing the contaminated air at the top.

Krematorium II is supposed to have functioned as a homicidal gas chamber and a crematorium starting on March 15, 1943, before its entry into official service on March 31 [1943], to November 27, 1944, "annihilating a total of approximately 400,000 people, most of them Jewish women, children, and old men" (p. 183).

Pressac offers no proof in support of such statements. He even states that the "industrial" extermination of the Jews at Auschwitz-Birkenau was "planned between June and August 1942 and actually implemented between March and June 1943 by the entry into service of the four *Krematorien*" (p. 184). These dates are known to be those on which the Germans, alarmed by the spread of typhus, decided to build these crematoria, and later completed the construction, but one cannot see what allows Pressac to assert, *additionally*, that these dates coincide with a decision to gas and an employment for gassing! Nowhere does he reveal to us who made such a decision, when, how, why, what were the authorizations, the instructions, the funding, and, as well, who, on the spot, was requisitioned for such an undertaking and what it must have taken to set in motion the modalities of this gigantic murder. He states that documents specifying the

date of the decision to modify the crematorium for "criminal" ends are lacking (*Ibid.*)!

Krema III, too, is said by Pressac to have been planned WITHOUT a homicidal gas chamber (p. 200). The Germans are supposed to have carried out the same "do-it-yourself" improvisation as in *Krema II*. *Krema III* is supposed to have operated from June 25, 1943 to November 27, 1944, "killing about 350,000 victims" (p. 183).

Krema IV and *V* are supposed to have been planned WITH homicidal gas chambers (p. 384). They are supposed to have functioned, one beginning on March 22, the other on April 4, 1943 (p. 378), but to have been scarcely used. "After two months, *Krematorium IV* was completely out of service. *Krematorium V* did not enter service until later, but was scarcely any better." (p. 384, 420). The gassing procedure is described as "illogical to the point of absurdity" (p. 379) and as "constituting a circus act" for the SS man carrying out the gassing (p. 386; see p. 43-46 below).

It is important to recall here that in 1982 Pressac maintained that *Kremas IV* and *V* had been planned WITHOUT homicidal gas chambers; the Germans had, according to him, transformed harmless rooms into homicidal gas chambers ("Les 'Krematorien' IV et V de Birkenau et leurs chambres à gaz, construction et fonctionnement," *Le Monde juif*, July-September 1982, p. 91-131). He never lets us know why he renounced that thesis in order to adopt one diametrically opposed now.

To sum up, if one is to believe our guide, one obtains, as to crematoria planned WITH or WITHOUT homicidal gas chambers, the following sequence, arranged in chronological order according to initial date of operation:

Krema I: planned WITH homicidal gas chamber

Krema IV: planned WITH (Pressac's thesis in 1982: WITHOUT)

Krema II: planned WITHOUT

Krema V: planned WITH (Pressac's thesis in 1982: WITHOUT)

Krema III: planned WITHOUT

Neither logic nor chronology can be served by such caprice and such incoherence.

For Pressac, Almost No Zyklon B Used to Kill People

According to our author, more than 95 per cent of the Zyklon B was used to exterminate vermin, which take time to kill, and less than 5 per cent to exterminate people, who are easy to kill (p. 15). He doesn't let us know how he has arrived at these figures. Here, we are at a far remove from the claims of the run of Exterminationists, in particular Raul Hilberg, who assures us that:

> Almost the whole Auschwitz supply was needed for the gassing of people; very little was used for fumigation (*The Destruction of the European Jews*, New York, Holmes and Meier, Revised and Definitive Edition, 1985, p. 890).

One can imagine the consternation of Exterminationists on this point, as on many others, if, instead of vaunting the book without having read it, they should happen to open it up and start reading.

He Can't Explain the Absence of Blue Stains

According to our pharmacist, if the Germans used so little Zyklon B to murderous ends, that's because in order to gas a million men (750,000 in *Kremas II* and *III* and 250,000 elsewhere, p. 475), only tiny quantities were required, whereas much more was needed to kill insects. Pressac holds to his belief in this matter because it is for him the only way to explain a stupefying physico-chemical anomaly: the complete absence of blue stains in the places at Auschwitz and Birkenau at which, supposedly, Zyklon B was used to kill human beings on an industrial scale, while, on the other hand, one notices the presence, today, of large blue stains on the walls of the disinfection gas chambers at Auschwitz, at Birkenau, or in other concentration camps. These blue stains in the disinfection gas chambers are due to the presence, at one time, of hydrocyanic (or prussic) acid; this acid has remained in the walls where, combining with iron contained in the bricks, it has produced ferric-ferro-cyanides.

Pressac dares to state (p. 555) that, in the case of homicidal gassings, the hydrocyanic acid went directly into the victims' mouths before it could spread elsewhere and impregnate the ceiling, the floor, and the walls. The gas was not even deposited on the bodies of the victims, from which it could have emanated throughout the room. This naive explanation amounts to supposing that the hydrocyanic gas, in this case

and this case only, consisted of molecules with homing devices, so organized that these molecules divided up the job of being inhaled, each vanishing into its own particular mouth.

According to even its manufacturers, Zyklon B (employed since the early 1920's and still used around the world today under other trademarks) presents the inconvenience of needing "difficult and lengthy ventilation, due to the gas's strong capacity for adhering to surfaces" (doc. NI-9098). Pressac forgets that, according to his own theory, in *Leichenkeller 1* (less than 210 sq. meters) of *Krema II* alone 400,000 persons were gassed in 532 days (see p. 36 above), which implies that gassings of human beings were carried out with great speed and in quasi-continuous fashion. He knows that hydrocyanic acid is absorbed through the skin (p. 25). So many corpses, representing a skin surface far larger than that offered by the insects and impregnated, like it or not, by hydrocyanic acid, would have constituted no less a source of emanation of the dread gas, which would have gone on to settle all over the room. These corpses would have been, further, impossible to handle in the way we've been told, and I shall not recall here the extreme precautions which, in today's American penitentiaries, are required of the doctor and his two helpers in order to remove a single cyanic corpse from a hydrocyanic gas chamber.

The ruins of *Krema II* are eloquent: they do not bear the least stain of blue ferric-ferro-cyanide. Therefore, the Germans certainly never used Zyklon B there in the quantities needed to gas 400,000 persons.

He Admits That the Germans' Code Language Is a Myth

Pressac opens an enormous breach in the edifice of the traditional historians and especially in that of Georges Wellers when he rejects the thesis according to which, in order to camouflage their crime, the Germans used a secret language or "code." He states twice that this is a "myth," explaining himself at length (p. 247, 556). He well sees that the secret of such a massacre would be impossible to conceal. Following the Revisionists, he submits documents which prove that the camps at Auschwitz and Birkenau were, if one may say so, transparent. Thousands of civilian workers mingled each day with the prisoners (p. 313, 315, 348,...). Numerous civilian

firms, located at different places in Germany and Poland, received orders for the construction of the crematoria, the disinfection gas chambers or the gas-tight doors. The *Bauleitung* alone comprised around a hundred employees; photographs show engineers, architects, and draftsmen in their offices (p. 347) where—as was known long before Pressac—the plans of the crematoria were displayed for all to see. The aerial photographs taken by the Allies show that at Auschwitz, as at Treblinka too, the farmers cultivated their fields right up to the camp fences. On the other hand, it is certain that the Germans sought zealously to conceal their industrial operations at Auschwitz (in vain, by the way). Thus the following paradox would arise: at Auschwitz, the Germans strove to hide what was going on at all their factories (armaments, synthetic petroleum, synthetic rubber, etc.) except...at their "death factories," supposedly located in the crematoria.

Unsubstantiated Statements and Manipulations

The book abounds with unsubstantiated statements and manipulations throughout.

What evidence does the author have to support the claims, hitherto unproved, according to which on September 3, 1941 Zyklon B was used, for the first time, to kill 850 people in the basement of *Block 11* at Auschwitz I (p. 132)? He states that, shortly afterwards (?), Russian prisoners were gassed in the morgue (*Leichenhalle*) of *Krema I*. He provides not a single bit of evidence. He states that, according to the "confession" of Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss, these prisoners numbered 900, then slips in the following words: "in fact between 500 and 700." The method is characteristic of Pressac: undoubtedly recognizing that the figure 900 is impossible in view of the dimensions of the room, he "corrects" it, and instead of making clear that his lower number is hypothetical, he *asserts* that "*in fact*" there were 500 to 700 hundred victims. I believe I could cite a good fifty examples of this process, which consists of introducing an unbelievable testimony, altering it to make it credible, and finishing up by according the result of this transformation the status of an established fact a little further on in the text, without reminding us that the original text was changed on the basis of a hypothesis.

Pressac alters words, numbers, dates, sometimes informing the reader of these changes with laborious justifications, at other times leaving him in the dark. Page 18 offers an example of this procedure. There the author sets forth the different characteristics of hydrocyanic acid (HCN, principal component of Zyklon B): molecular weight, etc. Suddenly, in a list of fifteen characteristics, he slips in the following: "Concentration used in homicidal gassing at Birkenau: 12 g/m³ (1%) or 40 times the lethal (or mortal) dose." By so doing, he gives to understand, from the outset of his book, that the homicidal gassings at Birkenau are a scientific fact of equal standing with the molecular weight of the gas under discussion; and he would have us believe that the amount of Zyklon used to kill people at Birkenau can be, almost to the gram, scientifically established!

This technique, a mixture of guile and aplomb, is standard operating procedure throughout the Pressac book. Page 227 includes surprising assertions. Without providing the least justification, the author declares that *Krema II* was used to gas Jews before it was even completed (the undressing room was not finished) and before it was handed over to the camp administration on March 31, 1943. He lets fly, as self-evident fact, that around 6,900 Jews were *gassed* in twelve days. And he specifies the exact numbers and dates: 1,500 Jews from the Cracow ghetto on Sunday evening, March 14; 2,200 Jews from Salonika on March 20; nearly 2,000 more Jews from Salonika on March 24; and 1,200 more the day after. None of these data is accompanied by the citation of any source other than "The Auschwitz Calendar," compiled by Polish Communists. If indeed those Jews arrived at the camp on these dates, on what authority does Pressac tell us they were *gassed*? The accusation made here against Germany is exceptionally grave and would require a sheaf of evidence of extreme precision.

Repeatedly Pressac mentions "Himmler's order of 26th November 1944 to destroy Birkenau *Krema II* and *III*," "thus making the end of the gassings official" (p. 115, 313, 464, 501, 533, etc.) but our autodidact can only repeat here, without verification, what leading Jewish authors have stated (with some variation as to the date). This order never existed, but one understands why it had to be invented: in the first place to explain why, when the camp was liberated, there were no traces whatsoever of the crime; further, to make up for the absence of any order to *begin* the gassings.

On what authority does Pressac assert that Himmler was present in person at a homicidal gassing at *Bunker 2*, on the day of July 17, 1942 (p.187)? How can he accuse Dr. Grawitz, "Head of the German Red Cross," of having seen the extermination of the Jews (in gas chambers, from the context) with his own eyes (p. 206)?

To begin with, whence has he derived his summary of the homicidal gassing procedure at Auschwitz such as it appears, fragmentarily, on page 16? His sketch surprises one.

> What the reader of a work entitled *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers* would expect is an in-depth study bearing on the technique and operation of these extraordinary chemical abattoirs without precedent in history, then a complete description of the process by which a million victims were gassed. But the author evades the subject. He furnishes nothing but vague, fragmentary hints, with the reader unable to determine whether they are based on "testimony," documents, or are simply the result of further extrapolations. Nowhere in his book does he return to the central subject of gassing *procedure*. To be sure, he mentions, but only in the context of *Kremas IV* and *V*, the procedure peculiar to the gassings in these two locations, a procedure so absurd that he speaks of it as "a circus act" (p. 386).

How is he able to write: "In May 1942, the large-scale gassings of arriving transports of Jews began in Birkenau Bunkers 1 and 2" (p. 98), especially given that, as we've seen above, he acknowledges knowing nothing about *Bunker 1* (appearance, make-up, and even site)?

How does he know that, when the Zyklon B was poured through the openings in the roof of *Krema I*, the SS men in the hospital located right next door avoided watching the operation because "at such times it was forbidden to look out the windows" (p. 145)?

In what way does a pile of shoes offer proof of the existence of homicidal gas chambers (p. 420)?

How is he able to maintain that the SS envisaged the possibility of alternately using *Leichenkeller 1* and *Leichenkeller 2* as gas chambers (p. 233)?

How could anyone serve up the enormity enthroned at the top of page 188 (column 2)? There Pressac declares that the "terrible hygienic conditions in the camp" required enormous deliveries of Zyklon B and that the SS, in order to hide these conditions, pretended to order Zyklon B... for exterminating the Jews; these requests were addressed to superiors who had "a general knowledge" of the extermination "without being informed of the practical details"!

The "Circus Act" of *Krema IV* and *V*

Had he been honest, the author would have begun the section he devotes to *Krema IV* and *V* by recalling his interpretation of 1982. At that time, he maintained in *Le Monde juif* (*op. cit.*) that these two *Krema* had been planned WITHOUT criminal intent, as simple crematoria; then, later, the Germans had carried out improvisations in order to transform certain rooms there into homicidal gas chambers. In 1985 the author was still sticking to this thesis (Colloque de l'École des Hautes Études en sciences sociales [François Furet and Raymond Aron], *L'Allemagne nazie et le génocide juif*, Gallimard/Le Seuil, 1985, p. 539-584).

But in the present work Pressac makes a 180-degree turn, giving his reader no warning other than after the fact, in veiled terms at that (p. 379, 448). Since Pressac is always confused, readers will be unaware of why he held his former thesis (that these *Krema* were planned WITHOUT criminal intent), or what led him to adopt a new thesis, diametrically opposed to the earlier one (these *Krema* were planned WITH criminal intent).[2]

The author's embarrassment is considerable. One wonders if he wouldn't be happy to send to the devil the history of these two *Krema IV* and *V* which—he insists on this point—should not have worked because they were so badly designed and constructed that the ovens were quickly out of service (p. 384, 420).

He writes that at the end of May 1944 most of the members of the *Sonderkommando* who lived in a section of the Men's Camp at Birkenau—and therefore, he adds in passing, openly and publicly—were transferred "to *Krema IV*, which was converted into a dormitory for them" (p. 389).

In the Holocaust literature the revolt of the Jewish *Sonderkommando*, which set fire to *Krema IV* out of despair at having gassed and burned masses of their co-religionists, is

presented as a page of heroism. For his part Pressac doubts the "veracity" of this story and writes that *Krema IV* was only a dormitory at that time and that

> this rebellion was an act of despair on the part of prisoners who were overcrowded and underoccupied, who had seen too much and felt that their end was near (p. 390).

As one will see right away, the layout of the premises was such that, at *Krema IV* and *V*, it would have made a mockery of a homicidal gassing operation.

Let's take either of these two *Krema*. To start with, since there was no undressing room, the crowd of victims is supposed to have been led into the morgue, where bodies were already piled up. There, the victims undressed with the corpses in full view. Then they were led into an antechamber, and next a corridor. Wisely, they passed the doctor's office, then a coal storage room. Next, at the end of the corridor, they were divided up between two "homicidal gas chambers," each equipped with a coal stove which was fired from the corridor. Then an SS man, stationed outside the building, is supposed to have poured the granules of Zyklon B through shutters on the roof. Due to the height, he had to use a ladder. He had to position the ladder and climb up for each shutter; he would open the shutter with one hand and empty the contents of the Zyklon can with the other. Quickly, he would close the shutter and go on to the next. At the next he would move all the more quickly because, HCN being lighter than air, the emissions from the granules from the first made the operation more dangerous, even if our SS man was wearing a gas mask.

At the end of the operation, he would have had to ventilate these rooms at length and with care. Given the small size of the shutters and the absence of any sort of equipment for ventilation, one can't see how the operation could be carried out. The doors would have to be opened, and thus the antechamber, the doctor's office, etc. The corpses would have to be removed from each of the two gas chambers; then dragged the length of the corridor and past three successive doors to end up... in the morgue, where presently other prospective victims would be arriving.

In his 1982 study in *Le Monde juif* (*op. cit.*, p. 126), Pressac wrote: "This improvisation is stupefying," concluding:

> So, it becomes obvious: *KREMATORIUM IV* AND *V* WERE NOT PLANNED AS CRIMINAL INSTALLATIONS BUT WERE CONVERTED INTO SUCH [Pressac's capitals].

In the great opus under review, he makes obscure reference to his feelings of "1980"; he says that at that time he found that the operation was "illogical to the point of absurdity" (p. 379).

Nine years later, has our pharmacist finally arrived at either explaining this operation, "illogical to the point of absurdity," or discovering that the Germans in fact used a different procedure, one logical, sensible, explicable? Not at all.

He begins by relating that the SS took note of the fact that their procedure "had become irrational and ridiculous" (p. 386). The SS gasser had to pour the Zyklon B through six openings (Pressac considers that there were three gas chambers, not two, the hall doing service as the third!). This SS man, he states, had to go up or down his ladder no fewer than eighteen times while wearing his gas mask.

According to our guide, after two or three gassings carried out in this fashion, the *Bauleitung* (Construction Office) determined that natural ventilation was dangerous and that the method of introducing the poison resembled "a circus act."

For ventilation a door was installed which resulted, Pressac assures us, in preventing the west wind from blowing the gas in a dangerous direction and which allowed the rooms to be ventilated only by the north or south winds.

As to the procedure for introducing the gas (the "circus act"), that remained the same, except that the shutters were widened by 10 centimeters. Pressac writes, in all seriousness, that

> The method of introduction remained the same, however, the camp authorities considering that a little physical exercise would do the medical orderlies responsible for gassing a world of good.

Here, as elsewhere, our pharmacist shows marvelous aplomb, telling his story without supplying his reader a reference to any evidence whatsoever. Where has he seen, for example, that the camp authorities (which? when?) decided that the "circus act" was absurd but that "a little physical exercise would do the medical orderlies responsible for gassing [the Jews] a world of good"?

One of the constants in Pressac's writings is the stupidity which the SS demonstrated by its boasts. He uses this to explain many of the anomalies, absurdities, and ineptitudes in the stories of homicidal gassing. It is curious that he apparently doesn't suspect that this "stupidity" could be

attributed precisely to those who describe to us the activities of the SS gassers in such fashion. Or yet again, since all these operations are supposed to be tinged with stupidity, is it the SS's stupidity or that of Pressac himself?

Lastly, it is surprising that before concluding that *Krema IV* and *V* definitely had homicidal gas chambers, he didn't wonder whether they didn't simply house showers or delousing chambers. I have in my archives a sketch of *Krema IV* and *V*, after a plan which I entrusted to him; I see written plainly in our subject's handwriting the words "Showers 1" and "Showers 2" at the places he calls the homicidal gas chambers today. And, on his third gas chamber, I read "Corridor."

Instead of One Proof, One Single Proof... Thirty-Nine Criminal Traces

In his chapter on proof, Pressac capitulates immediately. He is aware of his failure; despite his rodomontade, he admits:

> The day when a newly discovered drawing or letter makes it possible to explain the reality in black and white the revisionists will be routed (p. 67).

This statement, which he lets slip regarding a detail, could be applied to the work as a whole: Pressac hopes one day to discover a "specific German document" which will prove the Revisionists wrong but, as of now, he hasn't yet found anything.

He recalls that in 1979 I launched a challenge. I was asking for proof, a single proof of the existence of a single homicidal gas chamber. He is not up to this challenge. His title for Chapter 8 speaks volumes. It reads:

> "One Proof...One Single Proof": Thirty-nine Criminal Traces (p. 429).

For my part, I was expecting to find a chapter entitled: "'One Proof...One Single Proof'? Thirty-nine Proofs."

By "criminal traces" he intends "traces of the crime" or "clues to the crime." That is to say, as the author specifies, "presumptive evidence" or "indirect proofs." Pressac tells us that "in the absence of any 'direct,' i.e. palpable, indisputable and evident proof," an "indirect" (author's quotation marks) proof "may suffice and be valid." He adds:

> By "indirect" proof, I mean a German document that does not state in black and white that a gas chamber is for HOMICIDAL purposes, but one containing evidence that logically it is impossible for it to be something else (p. 429).

And at this point the reader is offered thirty-nine indirect proofs.

But let us return for a moment to my challenge, in its meaning and its rationale. And let us also see in what terms Pressac admits that he is unable to provide what he himself calls a "direct proof" or a "definitive proof."

On February 26, 1979, exercising my right of response, I sent a letter on this matter which *Le Monde* refused to publish and which is reproduced in my *Mémoire en défense contre ceux qui m'accusent de falsifier l'histoire* (La Vieille Taupe, 1980, p. 100). At that time I wrote:

> I know a way of advancing the debate. Instead of repeating *ad nauseam* that there exists an abundance of proofs attesting to the existence of the "gas chambers" (let us recall the value of this alleged abundance for the—mythical—"gas chambers" of the Altreich), I propose that, to begin at the beginning, someone supply me with one proof, one single precise proof of the actual existence of one "gas chamber," of one single "gas chamber." Let us examine this proof together, in public.

It goes without saying that I was prepared to consider as "proof" what my opponents themselves chose to designate as such. My challenge is explained by an ascertainment: the Exterminationists all employed the all-too-facile system of "converging bundles of presumptions" or again, as it was called in past times, "adminicles" (parts of a proof, presumptions, traces). Each of their alleged proofs, rather shaky, was supported by another proof, itself rather fragile. There was much use of testimonial proof, which is the weakest of all since, as its name indicates, it is based only on testimony. The "essence" of the testimony of Kurt Gerstein was called on, supported by the "essence" of the confession of Rudolf Höss, which rested on the "essence" of a personal diary in which, they say, in veiled language, Dr. Johann-Paul Kremer revealed, and at the same time concealed, the existence of the gas chambers. In other words, the blind man leans on the cripple, guided by the deaf man. In the past, at the time of the witchcraft trials, judges made great use of

adminicles and, in order to condemn witches and wizards, relied on a strange accounting method whereby a quarter of a proof added to a quarter of a proof, itself added to half a proof, were considered to equal a real proof (the film *Les Sorcières de Salem* [the French version of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*] depicts a judge practicing this type of arithmetic). Naturally, one couldn't provide definitive proof of the existence of Satan and of a meeting with him. It was impossible to prove his existence as one would prove that of a human being. That wasn't the fault of the judges, the thinking went, but precisely that of Satan, who, it was no doubt thought, was too naughty to leave traces proving his misdeeds. Intrinsically perverse by nature, Satan left at the most only vague traces of his passing through. These traces did not speak of themselves. One had to make them speak. Especially wise intellects were skilled at detecting them in places where ordinary people saw nothing. For minds such as these, Satan had tried to cover his tracks but had forgotten to hide the traces of his so doing, and, beginning there, learned magistrates, helped by scholarly professors, were able to reconstruct everything.

It was no different from any of the trials in which, since 1945, SS men have been tried for their participation, always indirect, in the homicidal gassings. Like adepts of Satan, these SS men allegedly left not a single trace of the gassings, but trained minds (the Poliakovs and the Wellers), testifying in their writings or at the bar of justice, have known how to foil their tricks, unravel the mystery and reconstruct the crime in all its Satanic horror; they have interpreted, deciphered, decoded, and decrypted everything.

No "Direct Proof," He Finally Concedes

Pressac writes:

> The "traditional" historians provided him [Faurisson] an "abundance of proofs" which were virtually all based on human testimony (p. 429).

He also states that there have been photographs of which certain have traditionally passed as proof of the existence of homicidal gassings, but he admits that not a single one of these can be "presented as definitive proof" (*Ibid.*).

Not a single one of the numerous plans of the *Krema* of Auschwitz and Birkenau in his possession indicates "explicitly," he writes, the use of homicidal gas chambers

although in the trials certain of these plans were employed as though they were explicitly incriminating (*Ibid.*).

There remain, he writes, only the various items of correspondence and official documents of German origin, which have, for example, been used in the "Faurisson trial"; but which, according to him, have never formed more than a convincing body of presumptive evidence (*Ibid.*).

The list of thirty-nine "criminal traces" brings to mind an enumeration (in the style of François Rabelais or Jacques Prévert) of disparate objects. One sees a parade of harmless technical terms drawn from the realms of the architect, the heating engineer, or the plumber, over which our pharmacist from La Ville de Bois wracks his brain to uncover darker designs. Pressac is without equal in making screws, nuts, bolts, and even the very screwheads speak.[3] It would be tedious to go through all thirty-nine clues. I shall restrict myself to the ones which, according to him, are essential.

Harmless Technical Terms

But beforehand I would like to call to the English-speaking reader's attention several German technical terms in fairly commonplace usage.

In order to designate a delousing gas chamber (or a gas chamber for training recruits in the use of gas masks), the Germans use the word "*Gaskammer*" and, when the context is sufficiently clear, simply "*Kammer*." A gas-tight door is a *Gastür* or *gasdichte Tür*; English speakers use "gas-proof door" as well as "gas-tight door"; this type of door can be used either for delousing gas chambers or for airlocks (for example, airlocks in an oven room or in an air-raid shelter).[4] In a more general fashion, a gas-tight door may be found anywhere in a building where there is a risk of fire or explosion; this is so in a crematorium, where high-temperature ovens are in operation. I believe that in Germany—this has to be verified—doors to basements with central heating installations are, generally if not compulsorily, gas-tight to contain fire, explosion, or gas leakage. "*Gasprüfer*" means "gas detector." "*Brausen*" means "shower heads" (for watering, spraying, showering). "*Auskleideraum*" means "undressing room" and, in *delousing* installations, refers to the room in which, on the "dirty side" (*unreine Seite*), persons undressed; it is not impossible, but I

haven't been able to verify, that in a morgue the same word is applied to the room in which clothes were removed from the corpses. Pressac introduces into evidence the existence of words such as *"Drahtnetzeinschiebvorrichtung,"* which he translates as "wire mesh introduction device," and *"Holzblenden,"* "wooden covers"; I do not think these words call for any special comment.

On the other hand, it is inadmissible that at the very start of his book, where he claims to enumerate the terms used by the *Bauleitung* in order to designate "delousing" or "disinfection," he noted the words *Entlausung*, *Entwesung*, and *Desinfektion* without taking the chance to recall that one of the terms most frequently used by the Germans to designate this type of operation is: *Vergasung*, which is translated by "gassing." For example, to stick to the documents cited by Pressac, Nuremberg document NI-9912, which I was the first to publish and for which he is indebted to me, designates gassing only by *Durchgasung* or *Vergasung*; this last word, which figures in the first paragraph of Section III, was translated into English as "fumigation" (p. 18, col. D). In a document cited by Pressac himself, General Glücks speaks of "gas for gassing" the camp due to the typhus epidemic: *"Gas für Vergasung"* (see above, p. 32); as for Commandant Höss, he referred to disinfection gassings as *"Vergasungen"* (see Part II of this article in the next (Summer) issue of *The JHR*.).

In passing I wish to specify that, for the reader's convenience, I have translated *"Entlausung"* and *"Entwesung"* the same, that is, by "disinfection." I note moreover that in the language used by the *Bauleitung* or in the ledgers of the locksmith of Auschwitz, there is a tendency to use the words interchangeably, without always distinguishing between "delousing" and "disinfestation."

In *Krema II* and *III*, the ventilation of the area which Pressac dares call a gas chamber, whereas it was a morgue, was exactly the opposite—and he admits this—of the way it must have been if Zyklon B had been employed there. Zyklon B is essentially hydrocyanic acid, a gas lighter than air. Therefore ventilation would have had to proceed from the bottom to top, with air blowing in at ground level and being extracted at ceiling level. But it was done from top to bottom as... in a morgue. *Pressac does not try to explain this anomaly, which destroys his thesis, at its foundations, one could say.* He makes

note of it, then does not even attempt to come up with an explanation.

Fourteen Shower Heads and A Gas-Tight Door

A discovery on which he prides himself, truth to tell the only one which he presents as "definitive" (p. 430) before declaring that it "indirectly" (p. 430) proves the existence of a homicidal gas chamber, is an inventory from *Krema III* for 14 shower heads (*Brausen*) and a gas-tight door (*gasdichte Tür*). Giving in to enthusiasm at first, our inventor writes on page 430:

> [THIS] DOCUMENT [...] IS DEFINITIVE PROOF OF THE PRESENCE OF A *HOMICIDAL* GAS CHAMBER IN LEICHENKELLER 1 OF KREMATORIUM III.

In 1986, the magazine *VSD* had published an interview with Serge Klarsfeld under the title "Les historiens du mensonge" ["The Historians of the Lie"], May 29, p. 37). There Klarsfeld admitted that until then "no one [had] bothered to compile the material proofs" of the existence of the gas chambers. To the question "Why were there no longer real proofs?," he answered:

> There were the beginnings of proofs which embarrassed the Faurissonians but had not yet silenced them. In particular, two letters analyzed by Georges Wellers, dating from 1943, which spoke, one of a gassing cellar, the other of three gas-tight doors to be installed in the crematoria.

Klarsfeld announced that he was eventually going to publish "a monumental work on Auschwitz-Birkenau by Jean-Claude Pressac." He added that the author had discovered the "proof of proofs":

> In all he has found 37 proofs, one of them definitive, of the existence of a homicidal gas chamber in [*Krema III*] at Birkenau.

The interview was accompanied by "the irrefutable proof" in the form of a reproduced document described as follows:

> On this receiver from [*Krema III*] signed by the camp commandant of Auschwitz, one reads at the top of the last two columns: 14 shower heads (*Brausen*), 1 gas-tight door (*gasdichte Tür*).

Regarding this "definitive" or "irrefutable" proof, Klarsfeld declares that it concerns

> A document which mentions both a gas-tight door and 14 shower heads.

To which he adds by way of commentary:

> Come, let us be logical, if this was a shower room, why this gas-tight door? The logic is flawless.

The logic is certainly not flawless and besides, as is obvious, here Klarsfeld makes use of a rhetorical technique dear to Pressac: preterition (and what's more, in the interrogative form).

I sent the magazine a text by way of right of response but they refused to publish it.

To begin with, this interview is actually a confession. In it Klarsfeld acknowledges that, until then, nobody had bothered to gather the material proofs. For his part Pressac declared at about the same time: "Until now there have been the testimonies and only the testimonies" (*Le Matin de Paris*, May 24-25, 1986, p. 3). In other words a terrible charge, an atrocious accusation against Germany had been broadcast throughout the world up to that time with no real proof, merely with the "beginnings of proofs" or with "testimonies." The murder weapon had never been subjected to expert examination.

The text I submitted by right of response recalled that the gas-tight doors were commonplace and that, for example, before and during the war it was compulsory to equip every place which could serve as a bomb shelter with gas-tight doors. I added that the gas-tight doors didn't imply, any more than do gas masks, a homicidal gassing.

Serge Klarsfeld, embarrassed by my use of citations from his interview in a text I devoted to Elie Wiesel ("Un grand faux témoin: Elie Wiesel" [A Prominent False Witness: Elie Wiesel], *Annales d'Histoire Révisionniste*, no. 4, 1988, p. 163-168 [published as a leaflet by IHR, 1822½ Newport Blvd., Suite 191, Costa Mesa, CA 92627]), blundered by publishing a letter in *Le Monde Juif* (January-March 1987, p. 1) in which he stated that his interview was "mistakenly edited" at certain points. But there are denials which are as good as confirmations, and such was the case here, since Klarsfeld, compounding his mistake, was then impelled to write:

> It is evident that in the years following 1945 the technical aspects of the gas chambers have been a neglected topic

because back then no one imagined that their existence would have to be proved.

Pressac had before his eyes a typed form, probably mimeographed, in numerous copies. Headings down the side of the page listed various parts of a building (rooms, elevator cage, hallway, toilet, etc.); across the top were headings for different fittings (lamps, chandeliers, lanterns, ovens, electrical plugs, etc.). Both horizontal and vertical listings left blank spaces for additional headings. The form in question referred to rooms in *Krema III*, among them *Leichenkeller 1* and *2*. Regarding *Leichenkeller 1*, alleged to have been the homicidal gas chamber, the following had been entered: 12 of a certain type of lamp, 2 water taps, 14 shower heads and (handwritten in ink) 1 gas-tight door. For *Leichenkeller 2*, allegedly the undressing room, 22 lamps and 5 faucets have been noted.

From the juxtaposition of 14 shower heads and a gas-tight door in the same room (part of a morgue), Pressac concludes that he is confronted with a homicidal gas chamber (!) outfitted with *dummy* shower heads; these shower heads, he adds with admirable composure, were "made of wood or other materials and painted" (p. 429; see also p. 16)!

The reasoning here is disconcerting. Pressac frames it in expressly the following terms:

—A gas-tight door can be intended only for a gas chamber [implying: a *homicidal* gas chamber];

—Why does a [homicidal] gas chamber have showers in it?

This reasoning evinces, aside from its innuendoes, a grave error. A gas-tight door can be found, as I've already stated, at any place in a structure in which, as is the case in a crematorium, ovens operate at high temperatures, with the risk of fire, explosion, and gas leakage. They may also be in air-raid shelters, in disinfection gas chambers, in morgues, etc. Finally, *Krematorium III* could have had, in all or in part of its *Leichenkeller 1*, a shower or wash room (every crematorium has a room for washing corpses). Furthermore, in another passage, Pressac writes that Bischoff, head of the construction office, requested, on May 15, 1943, the firm of Topf & Sons, specialists in the construction of crematoria, "to draw up the plans for 100 showers using water treated by the waste incinerator of *Krematorium III*" (p. 234); we know that there

was a shower room on the ground floor because the plan is detailed enough to show it; on the other hand, the plan of the basement is not detailed and indicates only the general layout of *Leichenkeller 1* and *2*.

But Pressac must sense the frailty of his argument since, once his enthusiasm has receded, he writes, nine pages later, in regard to this same document:

> This document is the only one known at present that proves, *indirectly* [my italics], the existence of a HOMICIDAL GAS CHAMBER in Leichenkeller 1 of *Krematorium III* (p. 439).

Let us observe, in consequence, that at issue here is the *sole* real proof and this proof is now *indirect*, although earlier it was decreed to be "fundamental" (p. 429) and "definitive" (p. 430). Georges Wellers himself, despite his readiness to entertain the most tainted "proofs," has conceded, since 1987, his total skepticism regarding the probative value of the document disclosed in *VSD* the year before. He told Michel Folco:

> Good, and the story of the shower heads on the form, you know, that isn't proof of what it was (*Zéro*, Interview, May 1987, p. 73).

As long as one refuses to carry out complete excavations of *Krema II* and *III* or to publish the explanations as to the function of these places furnished by the architectural engineers Dejaco and Ertl at the 1972 trial in Vienna, the matter can only be speculated on.

Four "Introduction Devices"

When Pressac discovers on another inventory that four "wire mesh introduction devices" and four "wooden covers" for *Leichenkeller 2* are mentioned, he puts forward the hypothesis that the inventory is in error and that it should read *Leichenkeller 1* (p. 232 and 430). His hypothesis is not gratuitous; it is founded on a material observation: an aerial photograph showing, apparently, four openings on the roof of *Leichenkeller 1*. But he is wrong to present subsequently his hypothesis as a certainty and to decide that the wooden covers belong to *Leichenkeller 1* (p. 431). If these devices were used to convey the Zyklon-B granules to the floor of the alleged gas chamber, how would they have been protected from the pressure of the crowd of victims and how would the gas have been able to spread through the room? I recall that, in the

procedure for disinfection gassing, the granules were not piled together or thrown in bunches but rather spread out on matting so that the gas could rise from the floor to the ceiling without hindrance or obstacle; after the gassing, the personnel, always wearing gas masks equipped with a particularly powerful filter, entered, following a long period of ventilation, to recover the dangerous granules, taking great care that none were left behind. Finally, Pressac seems to ignore that in 1988, at the Zündel trial in Toronto, the Revisionists were able to show that, if the four apparent openings are present in Brugioni and Poirier's work at the date of the aerial reconnaissance of August 25, 1944, curiously they no longer appear on the aerial photograph "6V2" of September 13, 1944, which Brugioni and Poirier didn't publish. Are they patches? Retouchings? Discolorations? On this matter one must read the expert testimony of Kenneth Wilson (Robert Lenski, *The Holocaust on Trial*, Decatur, Alabama, Reporter Press, 1990, p. 356-360, with a photograph of the expert at work, p. 361). The imposing block of concrete which constituted the roof of *Leichenkeller 1* and which can be inspected today on its outer as well as its inner surface bears not a single trace of these mysterious openings. As for the support columns, they were entirely of concrete and were not hollow. To conclude, if the inventory shows that these "devices" and "covers" belonged to *Leichenkeller 2*, it is dishonest to transfer them arbitrarily to *Leichenkeller 1* as Pressac has done in his "recapitulatory drawing for *Krematorien II* and *III*" on page 431.

Vergasungskeller

Pressac makes use, but not without hesitation, of the shopworn argument based on the presence of the word "*Vergasungskeller*" in a routine letter that the Auschwitz Construction Office addressed to the competent authorities in Berlin (doc. NO-4473). This letter, dated January 29, 1943 which contained nothing confidential and was not even stamped "Secret," states that in spite of all kinds of difficulties, and in particular, despite the frost, the construction of *Krema II* was nearly completed (in fact this *Krema* would not be operational until two months later). The letter states specifically that due to the frost it has not yet been possible to remove the formwork from the ceiling of the corpse cellar (which isn't assigned a number), but that this is not serious

since the *Vergasungskeller* can be used as a provisional morgue (p. 211-217, 432). For Pressac the use in this letter of the word *Vergasungskeller* involves an "enormous gaff [*sic*]" (p. 217), revealing the existence of a homicidal "gassing cellar" which could only have been *Leichenkeller 1*.

Since the word "*Vergasung*" is standard in German technical language to designate either the phenomenon of gasification[6], or carburetion in a motor, or disinfection gassing (translated in English as "fumigation"; see p. 50 above), it is impossible to see how, on the part of the author of the letter at Auschwitz, or on the part of the addressee in Berlin, a meeting of minds could result in the understanding that, for the first and last time, a *homicidal* gassing was at issue here! If Pressac, relying on another document, is correct in saying that the *Leichenkeller* in question here can't be *Leichenkeller 2*, he is wrong to deduce that consequently it can only be *Leichenkeller 1* (which recalls a homicidal gas chamber). He doesn't examine seriously another hypothesis: *Leichenkeller 3* with its three rooms.

To place myself in the framework of his hypothesis, if the word "*Vergasung*" is to be taken here in the sense of "gassing," Pressac must, before jumping to the conclusion of a homicidal gassing, consider the possibility that the word may refer to a disinfection gassing and since (locating myself throughout in the framework of his book), he makes great play of the testimony of the Jewish cobbler Henryk Tauber, I remind him that, according to this testimony, *such as Pressac reads it himself*, Zyklon B cans were stored in one of the rooms of *Leichenkeller 3*. According to him, the room of which Tauber speaks would have been the one, on plans in our possession, which is labeled "*Goldarb[eit]*"; perhaps he considers that this room, before it was used for melting down the dental gold[7], served as a storage room for the Zyklon cans (see p. 483 and the annotated plan on p. 485, number 8) but perhaps another room of *Leichenkeller 3* is meant. What is certain is that materials for gassing (*Vergasung*) were stored, if possible, in locations protected from heat and humidity, well-ventilated, and locked; a cellar was recommended.

Expressed otherwise, always in Pressac's frame of reference, the letter of January 29, 1943 might mean that the morgue couldn't yet be used but in the meantime the corpses could be placed in the storage room provided for the gassing

materials: in the *Vergasungskeller*, that is the "cellar for gassing [material]" (as *Vorratskeller* means "cellar for provisions").

On the other hand, *if* one makes of *Vergasungskeller* a cellar for homicidal gassing, *if* this cellar was *Leichenkeller 1*, and *if* the Germans contemplated making it into a provisional morgue, where would the victims have been gassed? *Leichenkeller 1* could not have been simultaneously a homicidal gas chamber and a morgue.

I notice on pages 503 and 505 that Pressac believes that I have given three successive and differing interpretations of *Leichenkeller 1*. I am supposed to have seen this room as first a room for carburétion, then as a morgue, and finally as a disinfection gas chamber. Not at all. In the first case, I recalled Arthur R. Butz's interpretation of the word *Vergasung* in the sense of "gasification" or "carburetion" but neither Butz nor I located this *Vergasungskeller* which, in any case, would have had to be close to the oven room and not in a dependency far-removed from the ovens. In the second instance I reminded Pierre Vidal-Naquet that the word *Leichenkeller* meant morgue or cold room and I specified: "A morgue has to be disinfected" (*Réponse à Pierre Vidal-Naquet, op. cit.*, p. 35). I added that chemical analysis would be able to reveal traces of cyanide because Zyklon B is an insecticide with a hydrogen-cyanide base. Rooms designated to hold corpses, in particular corpses of those dead of typhus, would have to be disinfected (I remind here that I use the word disinfection for "disinfestation," fumigating for insects, as well as for disinfection proper).

One will remark that Raul Hilberg mentions this document NO-4473 and cites three extracts in German, but avoids reproducing the word *Vergasungskeller* (*The Destruction of the European Jews, op. cit.*, p. 885). I imagine that as someone with a good command of the German language he saw that, had the Germans wanted to speak of a gas chamber, they would have used the words "*Gaskammer*" or "*Gaskeller*" (?) and not "*Vergasungskeller*," which one cannot translate as "gas chamber" without dishonesty. Besides, at the end of his book, Pressac himself is resigned to writing that the *Vergasungskeller* document "does not in itself constitute the absolute proof of the existence of a HOMICIDAL gas chamber in the basement of Birkenau *Krematorium II*" (p. 505).

Four Gas-tight Doors

On page 447, as "criminal trace" no. 22, Pressac cites a document which makes mention of, regarding *Krema IV*, four gas-tight doors. This time, for reasons which are not clear, he judges that this document does *not* amount to a "conclusive" proof of the existence of a homicidal gas chamber. This admission tends to reduce much of the value of his initial and fundamental "criminal trace," on which he cites the mention of a single gas-tight door on an inventory from *Krema III* as if it were a conclusive proof (see above, "Fourteen Showers and a Gas-tight Door," pp. 51-54).

A Key for a Gas Chamber

On page 456 he offers us as the 33rd "criminal trace" a document dealing with a "key for gas chamber." He does so with some embarrassment. That is understandable. Can one imagine a keyhole in a door, gas-tight, to a room which itself is supposed to be gas-tight? He writes that this is "incomprehensible with our present state of knowledge"; but why then represent this document as a "criminal trace"? The key might have been the one to the room in which the cans of Zyklon B were stored.

A Peephole for a Gas Chamber.

Still on page 456, he confesses that the 34th "criminal trace" is nothing of the sort, whatever may have been believed. In question is an order regarding "The fittings for one door with frame, airtight with peephole for gas chambers" (*Die Beschläge zu 1 Tür mit Rahmen, luftdicht mit Spion für Gaskammer*). In 1980, during proceedings brought against me by the LICRA (International League against Racism and Anti-Semitism), LICRA and all the rest offered this document as proof of the existence of homicidal gas chambers. Pressac, however, concedes that the document at issue was a command concerning a *disinfection* gas chamber, as I had already indicated in my *Réponse à Pierre Vidal-Naquet* (*op. cit.*, p. 80).

Other False Findings

"Criminal traces" nos. 33 and 34 ought never to have figured on Pressac's list of the 39 "criminal traces." Indeed, he presents no. 33 to us as "incomprehensible with our present state of knowledge," while no. 34 proves, as Pressac admits, the

existence of a disinfection gas chamber, not that of a homicidal gas chamber.

The business of the ten gas detectors, which he brings up on page 432, has already been scotched on page 371, where Pressac reveals that the firm Topf & Sons, manufacturers of crematory ovens, routinely supplied detectors for CO and CO_2; why try to convince us that this type of company, on receipt of an order for "gas detectors," would have understood by way of telepathy that in this case it was to supply detectors for HCN (and not of CO and CO_2) and... that it would be in a position to furnish an item that it didn't manufacture?

On pages 223 and 432, Pressac reveals what he believes is a document, dated March 6, 1943, according to which *Leichenkeller 1* of *Krema II* and *III* had to be "preheated." Pressac is triumphant. Why would one bother to preheat a morgue? And he implies that what they wanted to preheat was... a homicidal gas chamber. But nineteen days later, on March 25, 1943 to be exact, the authorities learned that such a preheating wasn't possible (p. 227).

On page 302 Pressac regales the reader with an account of how a corpse chute was replaced by a stairway, but toward the end of his book he abandons any attempt to include this in the "39 criminal traces."

He Ought to Have Pondered the Lesson of the Dejaco/Ertl Trial (1972)

I have had occasion to say that the real "Auschwitz Trial" was not that of certain "Auschwitz guards" in Frankfurt (1963-1965), but the trial in Vienna, in 1972, of two men responsible for constructing the crematoria of Auschwitz, above all those at Birkenau, Walter Dejaco and Fritz Ertl, architectural engineers. Both were acquitted.

If the scantiest of the fragments presented here by Pressac (and, as he admits, already known at the time), could have proved the existence of homicidal gas chambers, this trial would have been played up with great fanfare and the two defendants been crushingly condemned. The trial, which was long and meticulous, and which was at first noisily heralded, above all by Simon Wiesenthal, demonstrated—as Pressac concedes—that the prosecution's designated expert was unable to trouble the two defendants; the expert "virtually admitted defeat" (p. 303). In July 1978 I paid a visit to Fritz Ertl

(Dejaco had died that January), in hope that he could clarify certain points regarding the plans of the crematoria which I had found at the Auschwitz Museum. I discovered an old man, panicked by the prospect that his troubles were beginning anew. He was obstinate in refusing me the slightest information but he told me all the same that, for his part, he had never laid eyes on homicidal gas chambers either at Auschwitz or at Birkenau.

It is no secret that I would be delighted to have access to the documents from the pre-trial investigation as well as the transcripts of the Dejaco/Ertl trial. I am convinced that these would include detailed answers on the architecture of the Birkenau crematoria, on their internal layout, on their purpose, and, lastly, on their possible modification. This Dejaco/Ertl trial, the preliminary investigation of which began in 1968 at Reutte (Tirol), is all too often forgotten: it prompted, for the first time, a general mobilization to prove the existence of homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz. It marked the first time that the Soviet Union really played a role in furnishing valuable documents, and it witnessed the establishment of a sort of direct conduit between Moscow and Vienna through the intermediacy of Warsaw (Central Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland) and Auschwitz (archives of the Auschwitz Museum) (p.71). Officials from the Jewish community throughout the world, alerted by Simon Wiesenthal, spared no effort. The two unlucky architectural engineers thus saw massive forces combined against them. Let it be added that, since they were quite unaware of the chemical and physical impossibilities of homicidal gassing in the facilities they had built, their plea was that the buildings' construction was perfectly normal, but that surely it was possible that certain Germans had used them to commit crimes. Dejaco went as far as to say: "And every big room could serve as gas chamber. Even this hearing room" (*Kurier*, January 20, 1972). Dejaco was greatly mistaken, since a homicidal gas chamber can only be a small room requiring a very complex technology and specific equipment, but nobody caught the error. It was during this trial (January 18-March 10, 1972) that the only Jewish "witness" to the gassings, the all-too-renowned Szlamy Dragon, "fainted" on the stand, and gave no further testimony (*AZ*, March 3, 1972). Pressac says that he demonstrated "total confusion" (p. 172).

The *Leichenkeller* at Sachsenhausen Ought to Have Been Visited

In order to get an idea of the several *Leichenkeller* at Birkenau, Pressac ought to have visited the *Leichenkeller* at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, which is still intact and which, modernized in 1940/1941, offers a standard model of this type of building: on the ground floor there was a dissecting room, a doctor's office, etc., and in the basement three rooms occupying about 230 square meters. They could hold 200 corpses. Each room had its own function. One was designed for the undressing and laying out of 80 corpses; the next for laying out 100 corpses; the third was for 20 infected corpses. It is not claimed that there was a homicidal gas chamber in the Sachsenhausen crematorium. Pressac could have verified on the spot that a *Leichenkeller*, which has to be cool, possesses as well heating vents, humidification equipment, a special system for the isolation of the infected corpses (no direct drainage into the sewage system), a chute (*Rutsche*) very similar to those in *Krema II* and *III* at Birkenau with, on both sides, steps for the personnel who ran the elevator for transporting the corpses. Finally, at Sachsenhausen it is confirmed that the very word *Leichenkeller* is generic and is used of the building, ground floor and cellar, as a whole. This point of nomenclature alone should make us cautious regarding every invoice, every work sheet, every accounting record which, apparently referring to a basement room, perhaps actually concerns a room on the ground floor. For example, at Sachsenhausen the well-lit dissecting room or the doctor's office, both located on the ground floor, are described as belonging to a *Leichenkeller* (underground morgue).

He Ought to Have Done Work in the Archives at Koblenz

In the German Federal Archive at Koblenz, Pressac could have discovered, as I did, the extraordinary collection of documents NS-3/377, relative to the 1940 modernization of the *Leichenkeller* at Sachsenhausen. The three plans—of the foundations, the basement, and the ground floor—might have been done by an artist. There is in addition a collection of 90 pages itemizing the materials supplied and the expenses accrued; Pressac would perhaps have found in these pages the actual sense of words which he unjustifiably invests with

sinister meanings when he finds them in the records of the workshops at Auschwitz. By the way, I also have in my possession extracts from these records, carefully selected by the Polish prosecution: from them one can determine that the Germans and the internees under their discipline were scrupulous in entering the slightest order and job; reference is often made to disinfection gas chambers.

He Ought to Have Visited a *Leichenkeller* in Berlin

Pressac, who in his book speaks more of the crematoria and their ovens than of the gas chambers, should perhaps have visited the Ruheleben crematorium at Berlin-Charlottenburg to see a contemporary *Leichenkeller* capable of receiving 500 bodies at a time (see Hans-Kurt Boehlke, *Friedshofsbauten*, Munich, Callwey Verlag, 1974, p. 117, which shows a plan of the above).

He Ought to Have Given Thought to the Example of Stutthof-Danzig

Towards the end of his book (p. 539-541), Pressac devotes some attention to a small brick building which, at the camp in Stutthof-Danzig (not to be confused with the camp at Struthof-Natzweiler, in Alsace), is occasionally represented in the "Holocaust" literature as a homicidal gas chamber although it was obviously, as shown by its external stove, a disinfection gas chamber. Pressac's discussion is incoherent. He begins by stating, correctly, that, given the presence of the stove, the building was a gas chamber for delousing prisoners' effects (p. 539). Then, suddenly, with not a shred of supporting evidence, he declares that from June 22, 1944 (one admires his precision) to the beginning of November 1944 the building was used as a homicidal gas chamber for executing groups of about 100 people. Finally, on the next page (p. 540), Pressac changes his mind and concludes that no scientific examination of the "murder weapon" was ever made. From this he concludes, judiciously:

> which means that we do not know how the chamber functioned as a delousing installation and are unable to provide material proof of its criminal use.

It should be brought to Pressac's attention that therefore he had no right, a few lines earlier, to charge anyone with

homicidal gassing. *What's more, what holds for this camp near Danzig is just as valid for Auschwitz and it is inadmissible, there as elsewhere, to accuse the Germans of having used an abominable weapon without even having the weapon submitted to expert examination.*

No Expert Report on the Weapon
No Real Excavation

Until 1988 there had been no expert report on the gas chambers of Auschwitz and Birkenau. We had to wait until April 1988 for Fred Leuchter, a specialist in execution gas chambers at American penitentiaries, to publish a 193-page report on "the alleged execution gas chambers at Auschwitz, Birkenau, and Majdanek." Ernst Zündel, a German resident of Toronto, Canada, had hired Leuchter to examine those gas chambers and to gather samples there. The result was spectacular: there had never been any homicidal gas chambers in these camps. Only the sample taken from a gas chamber at Birkenau—officially recognized by the present camp authorities as having been used for disinfection with Zyklon B—contained meaningful, and even considerable, traces of cyanide; moreover, this chamber had the blue blotches which reveal that a gas containing hydrocyanic or prussic acid had been used in the past.

Pierre Vidal-Naquet dared to state in 1980 that an expert report had been "accomplished in June 1945 on the ventilation orifices of the gas chamber at Birkenau [*Krema II*], on twenty-five kilos of women's hair and on the metallic objects found in the hair" (re-edited in *Les Juifs, la mémoire et le présent*, Maspero, p. 222, n.41). I replied to him:

> I am familiar with the expert reports ordered by examining magistrate Jan Sehn and carried out by the laboratory located on Copernicus Street in Cracow. *They are not reports establishing specifically that such and such a building was a homicidal gas chamber* (*Réponse à Pierre Vidal-Naquet, op. cit.*, p. 35).

I shall not deal here with the explanations that I have advanced for the possible presence of traces of hydrocyanic gas in the vents, in the hair or in other objects. S. Klarsfeld knew of this expert report but he knew its limitations as well, since, in his 1986 interview (see above, p. 50-51), he admitted that up to that time real proof had never been published; but

an expert report would have constituted real proof. Pressac mentions the expert report of 1945 but is a long way from sharing Vidal-Naquet's views since he points out that, while scrapings from certain metallic objects described as galvanized plates originating from *Leichenkeller I* of *Krema II* were analyzed, this analysis, which revealed the presence of cyanide compounds, is only *qualitative* (Pressac's own emphasis—p. 233), although to serve as proof the analysis would have had to have been qualitative and *quantitative*.

Pressac informs us that the German association for "reconciliation with the Jews" and for "repentance," *Sühnezeichen* (Sign of Atonement), had in 1968 begun excavations in the ruins of the "gas chamber" of *Krematorium II*; I would be curious to know why these excavations were almost immediately broken off. In 1987 I received a revelation from French journalist Michel Folco. During a trip to Auschwitz organized together with Pressac, the two of them had met with Tadeusz Iwaszko, chief of the Auschwitz Museum archives, with whom I became personally acquainted in 1976. Folco asked him why the Poles had never resolved to carry out excavations and an expert examination, the results of which would have enabled them to silence the Revisionists. Iwaszko's response was that if proof of the crime were not discovered, the Jews would accuse the Poles of having suppressed it. Pressac wrote that in 1980 Iwaszko had already told him that excavations would have been of no value because in any case, whatever the results, the Poles would be accused of having "arrange[d]" the site (p. 545).

That's where the shoe pinches the accusers: they dread the results of excavations and analyses. The Revisionists, for their part, have risked undertaking such researches; their reward for doing so has been the Leuchter Report, which proves that there were no homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz, at Birkenau, or at Majdanek ("The Leuchter Report: The How and the Why," *The Journal of Historical Review,* Summer 1989, p. 133-139).

Notes

1. See Appendix 1 below (to be published with Part II of this article in the Summer 1991 issue of *The Journal of Historical Review*).
2. Our druggist is used to making blunders. In order to illustrate that, I recommend page 558. There he recounts how no one was willing to give credence to his first thesis (*Krema IV* and *V* were planned *without* criminal intent) but that fortunately one man came to his aid, a man who "launched" him and who allowed him to present his thesis at the Sorbonne Colloquium in 1982, a man who, he wants to confide, found his exposé "clear and remarkable." This individual, who in 1982 supported a thesis whose exact opposite Pressac sustains today, was none other than . . . Pierre Vidal-Naquet!
3. On page 500 he presents us with three "gas-tight" wooden shutters, the provenance of which he doesn't indicate but which probably were part of the disinfection gas chamber. He points out that the fixing bar is "attached to the shutter by two nuts and bolts. The bolt heads are ON THE INSIDE and the nuts are ON THE OUTSIDE" [original emphasis]. And he adds: "an arrangement that calls for no further comment . . .," thus giving to understand, without saying so expressly (Pressac makes frequent use of preterition), that these shutters were part of a homicidal gas chamber and that, had the bolts been "on the inside," the victims would have unscrewed the fixing bar and made their escape!
4. In a bombing attack, the door to an air-raid shelter is supposed to guard against two effects, among others, caused by exploding bombs: suction of the oxygen out of the shelter and penetration of CO into the same shelter.
5. This observation, which destroys his thesis, he makes three times. On page 224, he writes: "The ventilation system of *Leichenkeller 1* [the homicidal gas chamber] had initially been *designed for a morgue*, with the fresh air entering near the ceiling and the cold unhealthy air being drawn out near the floor. Its use as a gas chamber really required the reverse situation, with fresh air coming in near the floor and warm air saturated with hydrocyanic acid being drawn out near the ceiling. But the SS and [engineer Prüfer] chose to maintain the original morgue, ventilation system in the gas chamber, hoping that it would be efficient enough." On page 289, he recalls this "technical reality" of a ventilation system "inappropriately designed for a gas chamber." On page 489, he finally writes: "The levels of the air inlets (above) and extraction holes (below) prove that the system was designed for an underground morgue and not for a gas chamber, where the extraction of the WARM noxious air should be in the UPPER part."
6. See "die Vergasung der Koks" (coke gasification) in a technical study of the crematoria which appeared in 1907: *Handbuch der Architektur* (Heft III: Bestattungsanlagen), Stuttgart, Alfred Körner Verlag, 1907, p. 239. In this work I found much information on "Leichenkeller," "Leichenkammer," "Sezierraum" (dissecting room), on hygienic rules, aeration, disinfection, on particular precautions for infected corpses

(separate room with special aeration and lower temperature), on showers, on the doctor's office, on the washing room, on the length of time for cremation. When all is said and done, *Krema II* and *III* were simply classic types.

7. Pressac is right to recall, regarding this practice (commonplace during wartime where "recovery of non-ferrous metals" is carried out everywhere), that the "recovery of gold from corpses is current practice, even though it may be considered repugnant" (p. 294); medical students know that it isn't an activity peculiar to the SS!

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continued from page 4

appetite for the *minutiae* of the planning, construction, and operation of the Auschwitz crematoria and delousing facilities than IHR editorial advisor Robert Faurisson, who preceded Pressac into the Auschwitz archives and served as the strange French pharmacist's first mentor in the on-site, material study of the realities on the ground (and underground) in the famous concentration camp. Here, in the first part of a monumental study of the Pressac thesis and its import for Revisionism (translated from the original French as originally published in *Revue d'Histoire Révisionniste*, no. 3, November-December 1990–January 1991, pp. 65-155), Dr. Faurisson spares all but the masochistic the chore of moiling through Pressac's mammoth (and all but unavailable) tome by reducing its author's unprecedented efforts to exploit the material evidence to so much grist for the Revisionist mill.

Seeing is believing, especially for Revisionists. Our new associate editor, Mark Weber, has selected and commented on just a few of the many revelatory, "tell-tale" documents and photographs which make Pressac's *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers* a windfall for Revisionism. The relief one feels at the restoration of the architecture and equipment of Auschwitz to its original banality is a measure of just how bizarre and sinister a phantasmagoria the wizards of Exterminationism have conjured up. Truly Mark and Dr. Faurisson and their colleagues are benign magicians, wielding their restorative powers to dispel the hateful projections of the liars of Auschwitz!

The Journal of Historical Review is proud to publish, for the first time ever, the final plea of the defense lawyer in the 1947 trial of nineteen Germans for their role in alleged war crimes

continued on page 120

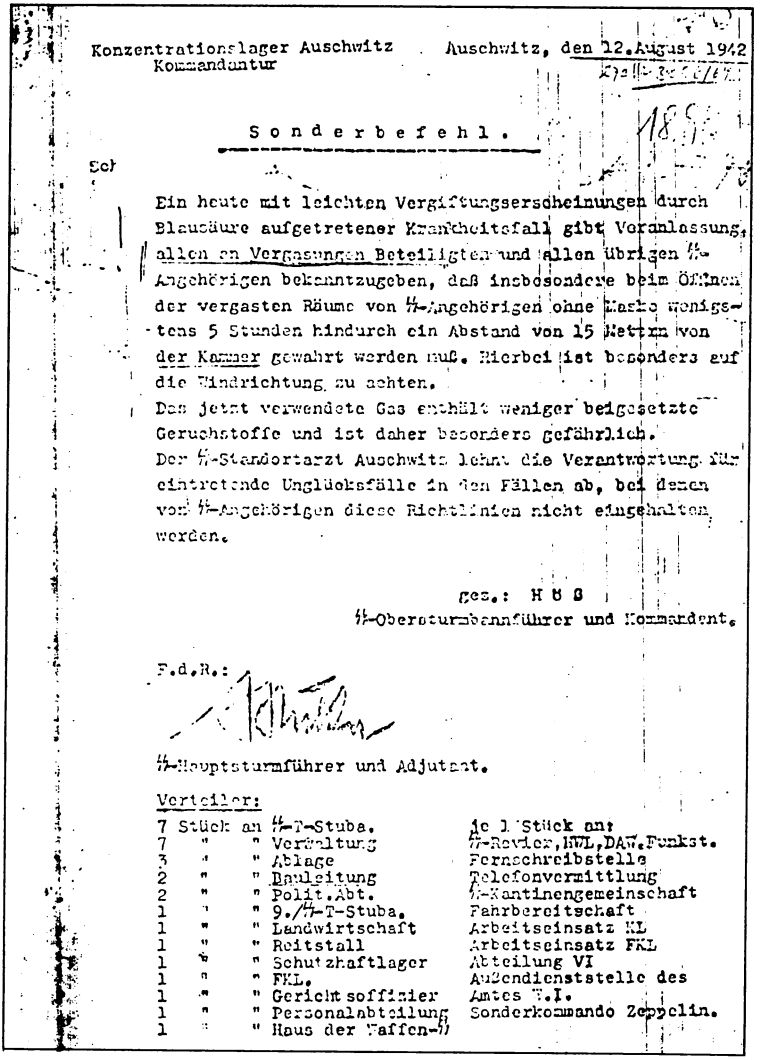
Tell-Tale Documents and Photos from Auschwitz

Jean-Claude Pressac's book, *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*, is the first serious and detailed response to the Revisionist critique of the generally accepted Auschwitz extermination story. This 564-page work is itself evidence that Holocaust Revisionism can no longer be dismissed as a temporary or frivolous phenomenon, but is a formidable challenge that must be taken seriously.

As Robert Faurisson and Mark Weber have pointed out in their reviews of his book, Pressac fails to prove his case. But in his ultimately unsuccessful effort to shore up the crumbling "Exterminationist" view, Pressac is obliged to make many highly significant concessions to the Revisionist position. Both explicitly and implicitly, he discredits countless Holocaust claims, "testimonies" and interpretations.

His book features hundreds of valuable illustrations—including many good-quality reproductions of previously unpublished original diagrams and documents—that simply cannot be reconciled with the generally accepted Holocaust extermination story. Reproduced on the following pages are a few of these illustrations, which were selected from Pressac's book by Mark Weber, who also provided the captions. (See also Weber's review of Pressac's book in the summer 1990 *Journal of Historical Review*.)

"One Louse, Your Death!" This bilingual (German-Polish) poster graphically warned Auschwitz inmates of the danger of typhus-bearing lice. (p. 54) Other measures taken by camp authorities to combat typhus included camp quarantines, routine delousings of barracks and clothes with "Zyklon" gas, quarantine of newly arriving prisoners, disinfection baths for inmates, and inspections of barracks. The dread disease claimed the lives of many tens of thousands of inmates. German camp personnel also fell victim, including SS garrison physician Dr. Siegfried Schwela and other high-level SS officers.



Konzentrationslager Auschwitz
Kommandantur

Auschwitz, den 12. August 1942

Sonderbefehl.

Ein heute mit leichten Vergiftungserscheinungen durch Blausäure aufgetretener Krankheitsfall gibt Veranlassung, allen an Vergasungen Beteiligten und allen übrigen SS-Angehörigen bekanntzugeben, daß insbesondere beim Öffnen der vergasten Räume von SS-Angehörigen ohne Maske wenigstens 5 Stunden hindurch ein Abstand von 15 Metern von der Kammer gewahrt werden muß. Hierbei ist besonders auf die Windrichtung zu achten.
Das jetzt verwendete Gas enthält weniger beigesetzte Geruchstoffe und ist daher besonders gefährlich.
Der SS-Standortarzt Auschwitz lehnt die Verantwortung für eintretende Unglücksfälle in den Fällen ab, bei denen von SS-Angehörigen diese Richtlinien nicht eingehalten werden.

gez.: H ö ß
SS-Obersturmbannführer und Kommandant.

F.d.R.:

SS-Hauptsturmführer und Adjutant.

Verteiler:

7	Stück an	SS-T-Stuba.	je 1 Stück an:
7	"	" Verwaltung	SS-Revier, HWL, DAW, Funkst.
3	"	" Ablage	Fernschreibstelle
2	"	" Bauleitung	Telefonvermittlung
2	"	" Polit. Abt.	SS-Kantinengemeinschaft
1	"	" 9./SS-T-Stuba.	Fahrbereitschaft
1	"	" Landwirtschaft	Arbeitseinsatz KL
1	"	" Reitstall	Arbeitseinsatz FKL
1	"	" Schutzhaftlager	Abteilung VI
1	"	" FKL.	Außendienststelle des
1	"	" Gerichtsoffizier	Amtes W.I.
1	"	" Personalabteilung	Sonderkommando Zeppelin.
1	"	" Haus der Waffen-SS	

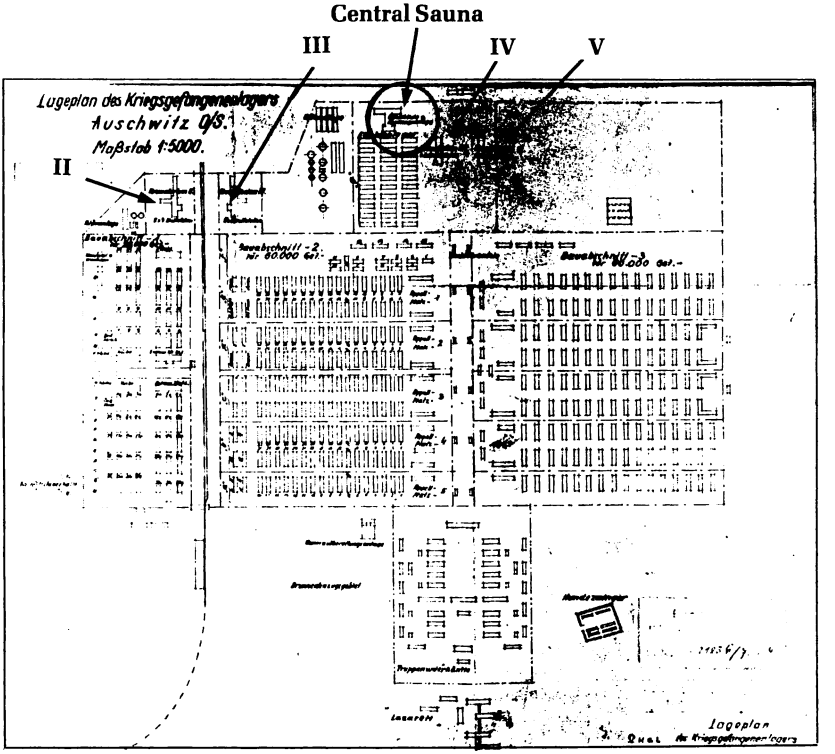
"Zyklon" (hydrocyanic acid gas), a widely available commercial insecticide and rodent killer, was used extensively at Auschwitz to kill typhus-bearing lice. It was used, for example, to fumigate clothes in delousing gas chambers, and to kill vermin in barracks and other buildings.

Commandant Rudolf Höss emphasized its deadliness when not used properly in this "special order" of August 12, 1942. (p. 201) Forty copies were distributed to officials throughout the camp. Höss warned:

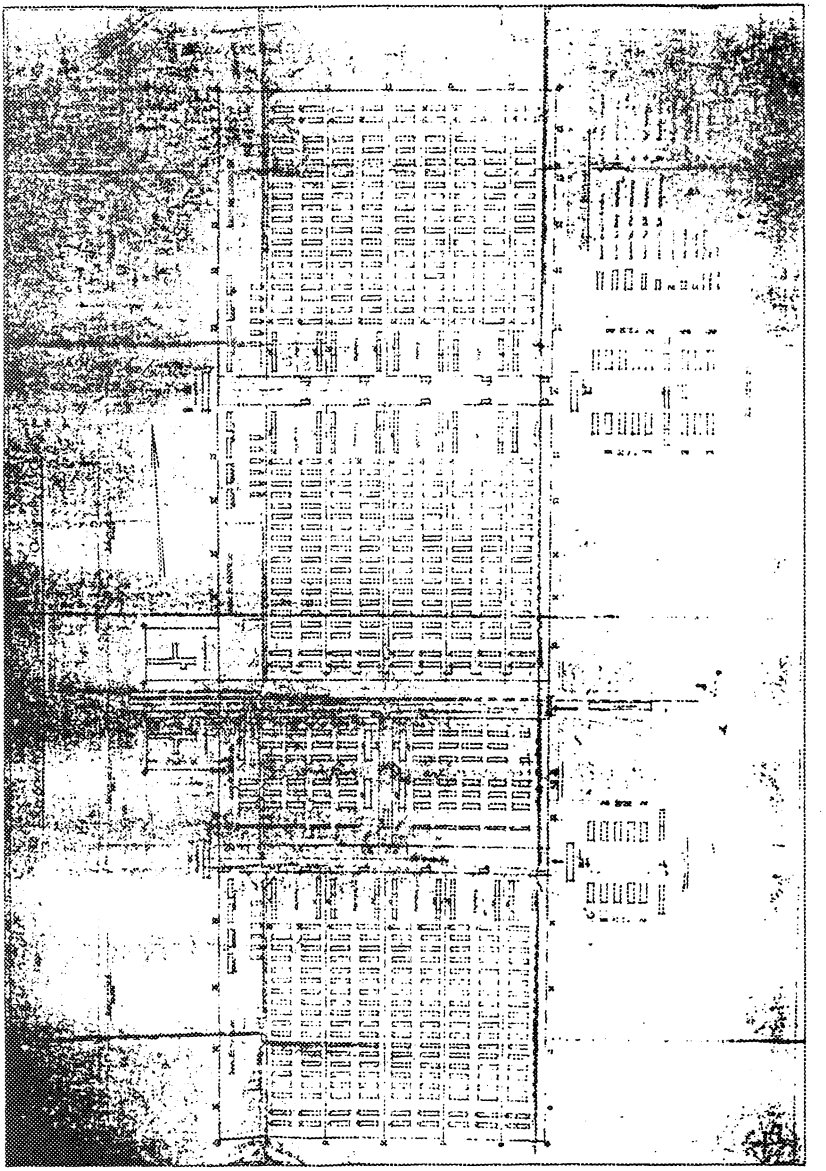
Today there was a case of illness due to slight symptoms of poisoning with Prussic acid [Zyklon]. This makes it necessary to warn all those involved with gassings, as well as all other SS personnel, that especially when opening gassed rooms, SS personnel not wearing gas masks must wait at least five hours and keep a distance of 15 meters from the chamber. In this regard, particular attention should be paid to the wind direction.

The gas now being used contains less [protective] odor additive, and is therefore especially dangerous.

The SS garrison physician refuses to accept responsibility for accidents that may occur in cases where SS personnel do not obey these guidelines.



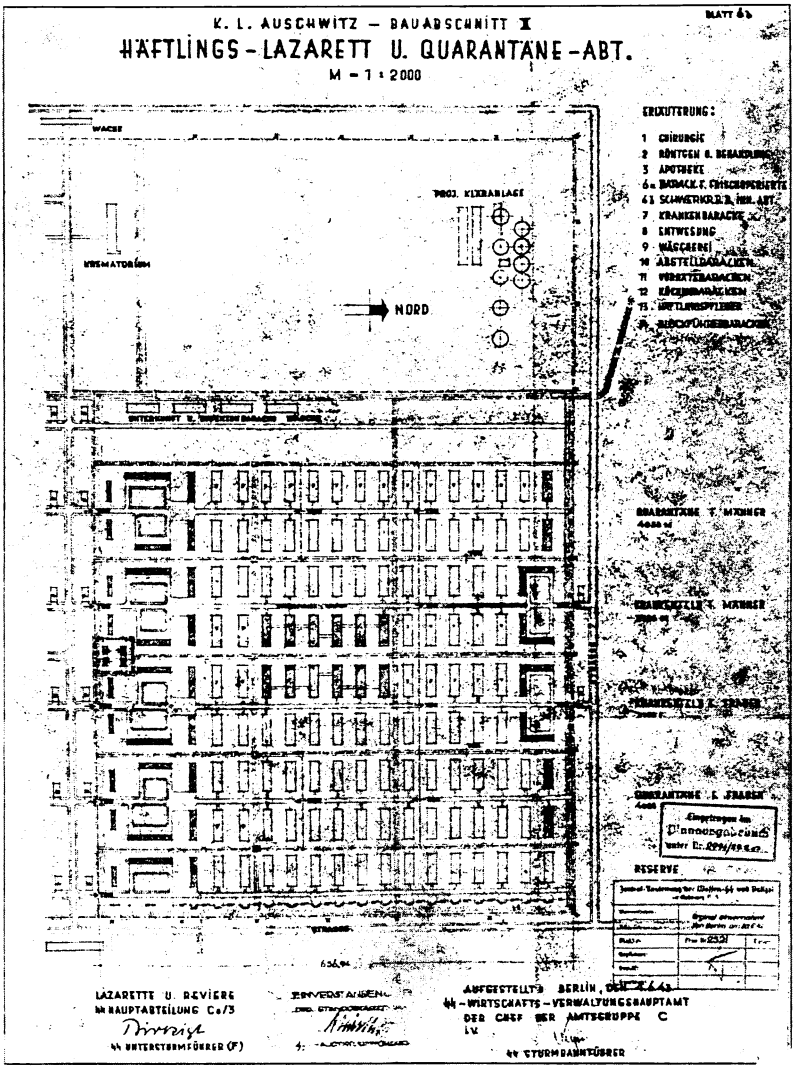
Shown on this March 1944 Auschwitz construction department diagram of the Birkenau camp are crematory buildings II and III (at upper left), and IV and V (at upper center). Between them is the "Disinfection and disinfestation facility" ("Desinfektions u. Entwesungsanlage"), which was also known as the "Central Sauna" ("Zentralsauna"). (p. 514.)



This August 1942 architectural diagram of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp, supposedly the Third Reich's main "extermination" center, shows that German authorities planned to enlarge the camp so that it would eventually hold 200,000 inmates. (p. 203) The "Mexiko" section at the top, which would hold 60,000 people, was only

partially completed, and the comparable section at the bottom was never begun. This document cannot be reconciled with the camp's alleged function as a top secret extermination center.

At no time were any of Auschwitz-Birkenau's four crematory buildings ever hidden, concealed or "camouflaged." They were in plain view, and even newly arriving Jews could easily see them. Crematory buildings II and III were particularly visible. In this photograph, taken in May or June 1944, crematory building (Krema) III can be plainly seen in the background. (p. 251) In the foreground are Jews who have just arrived at Birkenau from Hungary.



Auschwitz-Birkenau was greatly enlarged in 1943 and 1944 to accommodate the arrival of more and more Jews. Accordingly, plans were made for more extensive hospital and quarantine facilities.

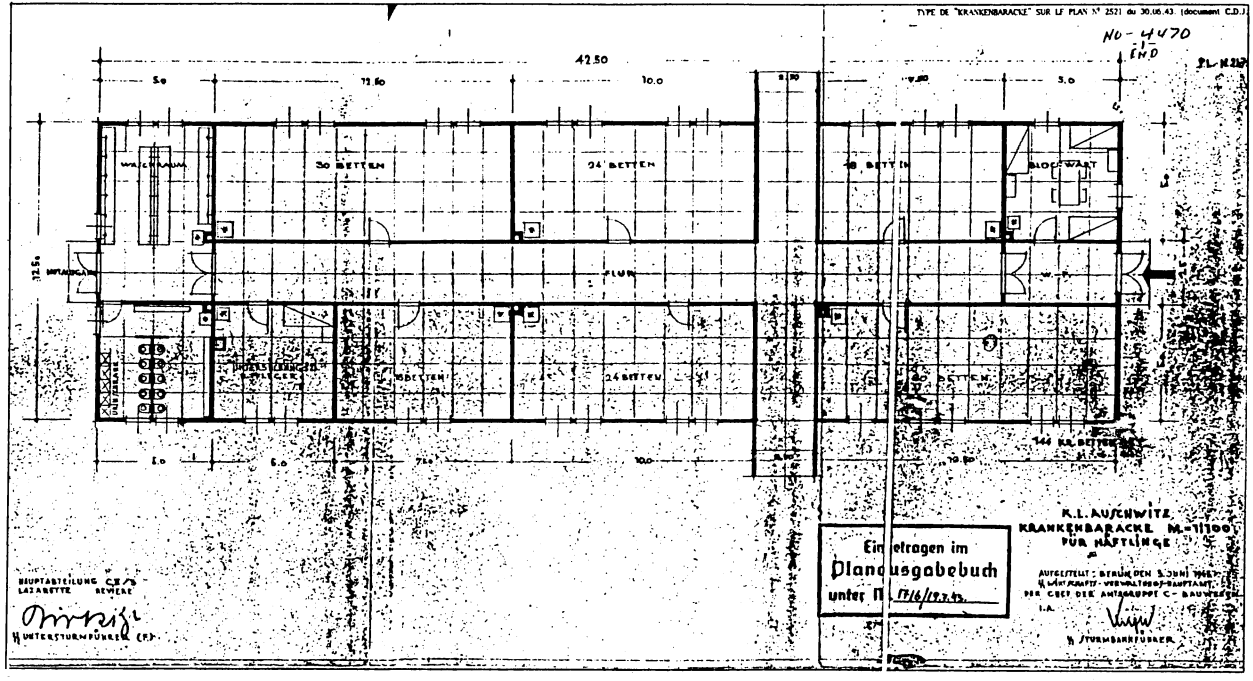
This plan for a new "Prisoner hospital and quarantine section" ("Häftlings-Lazarett u. quarantäne-Abt.") in the Birkenau camp's "Mexiko" section was prepared in June 1943 by the WVHA agency in Berlin that administered the concentration camp system. It was quickly approved by the Auschwitz camp construction department. This "hospital and quarantine" section for 16,596 inmates included

surgery, x-ray, delousing, and laundry facilities, as well as barracks for severely ill inmates.

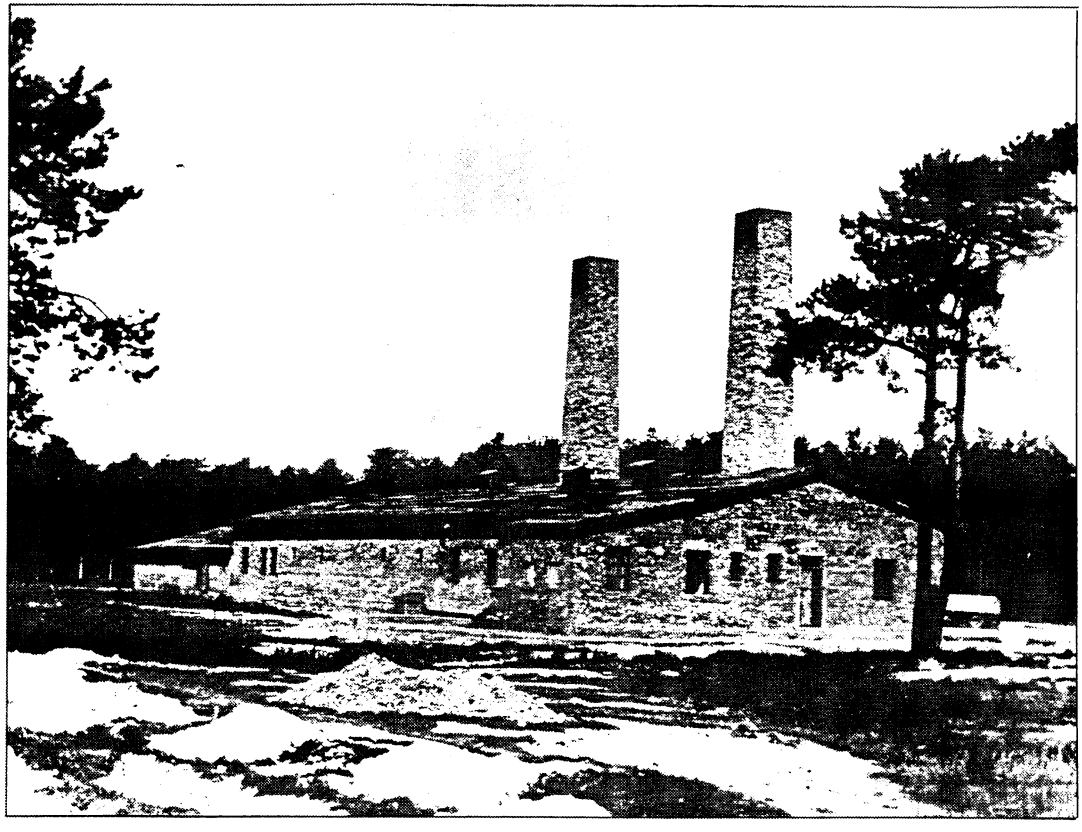
Pressac acknowledges the difficulty of reconciling these plans with the camp's alleged function as an extermination facility:

> There is incompatibility in the creation of a health camp a few hundred yards from four Krematorien [crematory facilities] where, according to official history, people were exterminated on a large scale.... It is obvious that KGL [concentration camp] Birkenau cannot have had at one and the same time two opposing functions: health care and extermination. The plan for building a very large hospital section in BA III ["Mexiko" section of Birkenau] thus shows that the Krematorien [facilities] were built purely for incineration, without any homicidal gassings, because the SS wanted to "maintain" its concentration camp labor force.

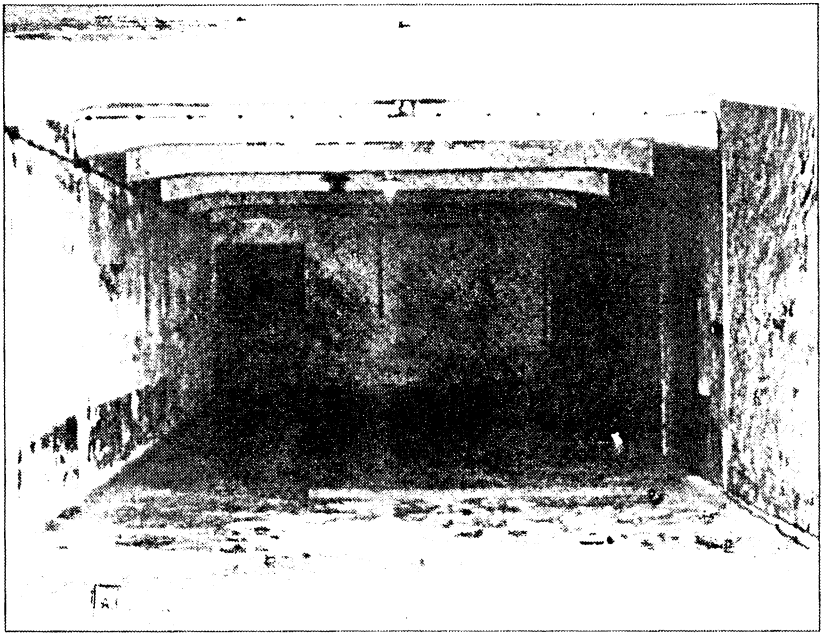
The "Mexiko" section was only partially completed and "became a transit camp in May-June 1944 for the Hungarian transports," Pressac reports.



Architectural diagram of an Auschwitz "barracks for sick inmates." (p. 513) The barracks has 144 beds, large wash and toilet rooms, and a room for medical staff. (This June 1943 diagram is also Nuremberg document NO-4470.) Photos of hospital facilities for inmates are also reproduced in Pressac's book. (pp. 510-511)



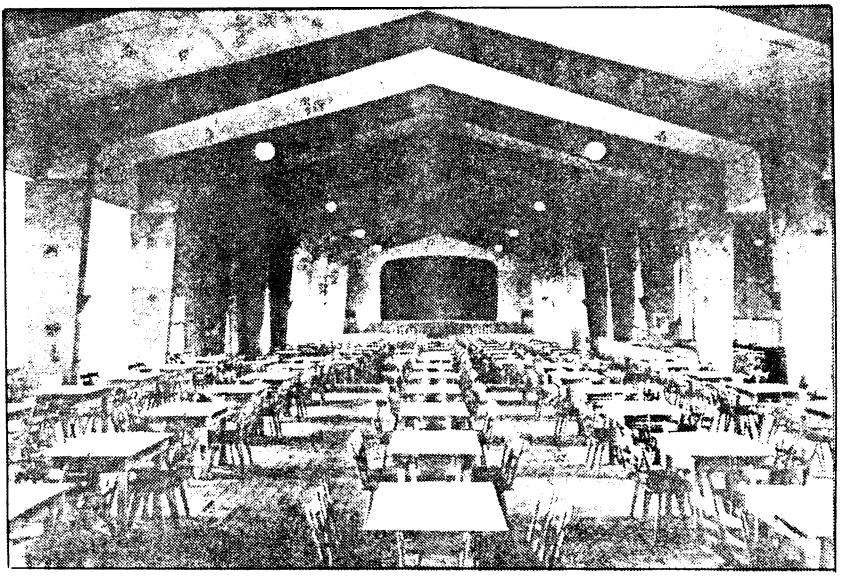
Auschwitz-Birkenau crematory building (Krema) IV shortly after its completion in late March 1943. (p. 418) This building, supposedly one of the principal extermination gassing centers, was actually built very hastily in response to the terrible typhus epidemic that raged during the summer of 1942. (pp. 392, 398) This facility was so quickly and so poorly constructed that it could be used only intermittently for a short time, and was shut down for good in May 1943. (pp. 413, 420)



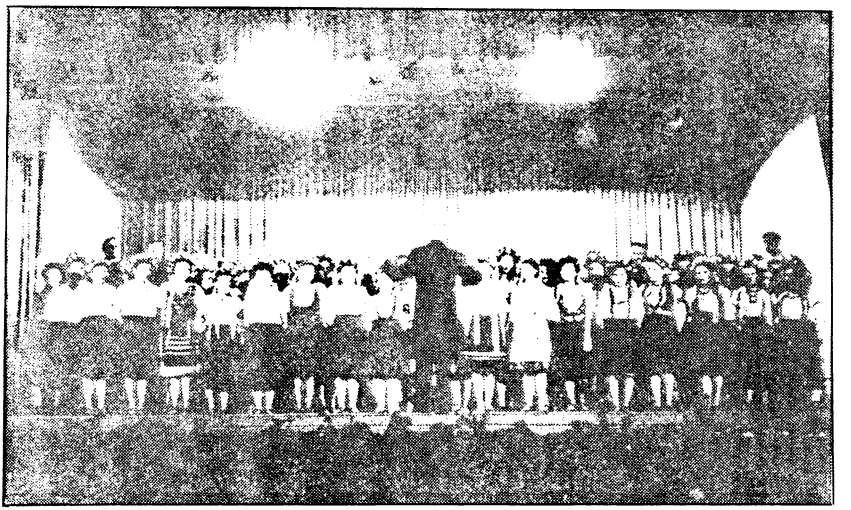
Were thousands of Jews murdered here? This is the inside of the alleged extermination gas chamber in the Auschwitz I main camp. (p. 155) German camp authorities never bothered to obliterate the incriminating "evidence" by destroying this structure. As Pressac acknowledges in his book (pp. 123, 133), there is no hard evidence that this room was ever an extermination facility.

Not long after the Allied liberation of Auschwitz in January 1945, Soviet and Polish authorities organized a dance on the roof of the supposed extermination gas chamber in the main camp. Apparently they did not regard it as a mass extermination facility. In his book about Auschwitz (p. 149), Pressac expresses astonishment and regret over this incident:

> Above the stage, dominated by a red star with the hammer and sickle, fly the flags of Poland (left) and the Soviet Union (right), with lamps mounted above them. This photograph proves that a dance was organized in 1945 on the roof of Krematorium I, and that people actually danced above the homicidal gas chamber. This episode appears almost unbelievable and sadly regretable today, and the motives for it are not known. This photo also proves that the present [1989] covering of roofing felt and zinc surround [sic] of the roof are not original.

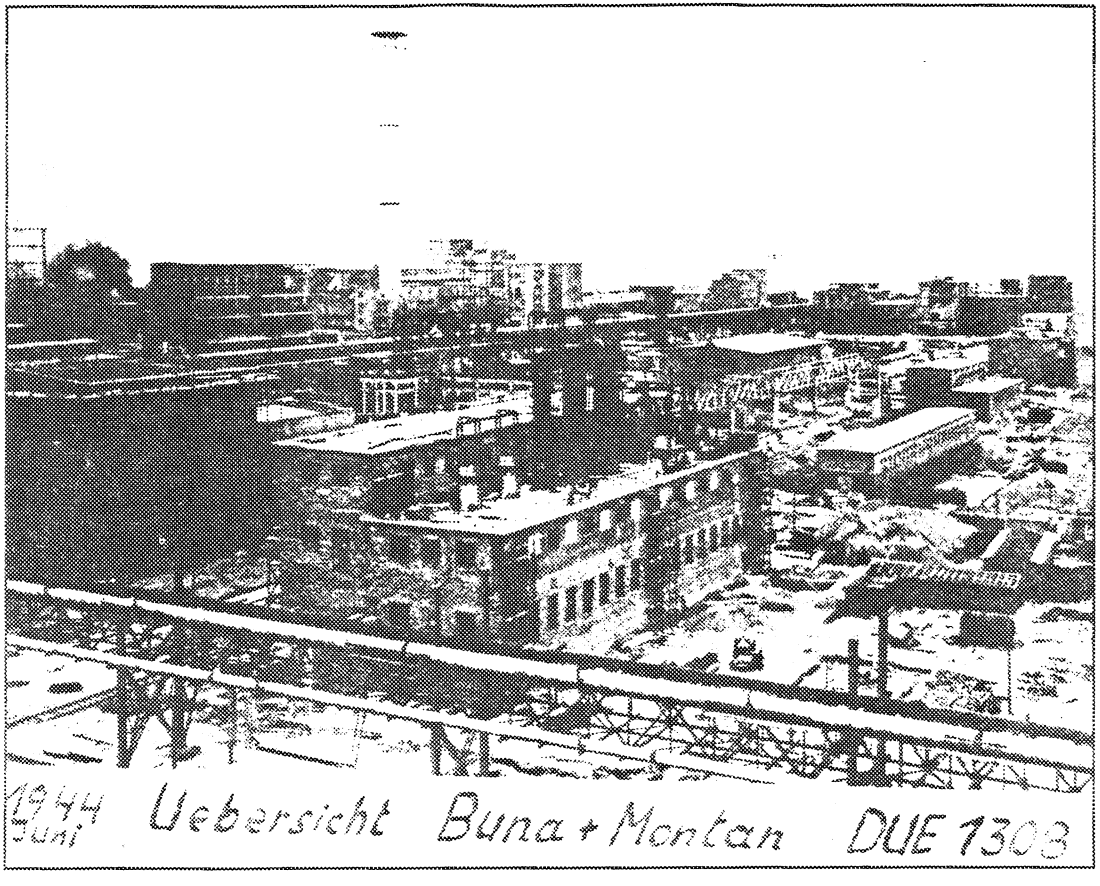


Eating hall for inmates at the Auschwitz III (Monowitz) camp. (p. 506) Inmates from Birkenau and the rest of the camp complex were routinely transferred to and from Monowitz, which hardly makes sense if Auschwitz had been an extermination center.



Ukrainian women's choir at the Auschwitz III (Monowitz) camp. (p. 506) A surprisingly wide range of free-time activities, including entertainment, was available to forced-labor inmates.

Partial overview of the extensive "Buna" industrial works at Auschwitz III (Monowitz) camp, where gasoline was produced from coal. (p. 506). This photo, as well as the two previous ones, are from the Duerrfeld document file in the National Archives (Washington, DC).



Major Poullada's Final Defense Plea in the Nordhausen-Dora Concentration Camp Case

LEON B. POULLADA
Introduction by Mark Weber

Published here for the first time is the informative and thought-provoking final defense plea in the postwar Nordhausen-Dora concentration camp case. U.S. Army Major Leon B. Poullada, chief defense counsel, made this presentation on December 23, 1947, to the seven American Army officers who served as judges. The text has been slightly edited for reasons of style and grammar.

The wartime Nordhausen-Dora or "Mittelbau" camp complex consisted of the Dora main camp and 31 satellite subcamps clustered around the town of Nordhausen (Thuringia). By far the most important part of this complex was the underground "Mittelwerk" factories where—from the summer of 1943 until April 1945—tens of thousands of concentration camp inmates, forced laborers from foreign countries, and German workers were employed manufacturing the high-priority V-2 guided missiles.

The Nordhausen trial opened on August 7, 1947, and concluded on December 30, 1947. It was one of 489 cases, involving a total of 1,672 defendants, conducted by U.S. Army military courts and commissions in the American zone of occupation in Germany.

Along with the trials organized by the other victorious powers, and particularly the inter-Allied Nuremberg IMT trial of 1945-1946, these postwar proceedings lent an aura of legal and historical legitimacy to the victors' version of history, and thereby played a key role in the shaping of our official mythology about the Third Reich and the Second World War.

In his plea, Major Poullada systematically confronts one emotion-charged issue after another, calmly but persistently

challenging the judges to set aside prejudice and presumption to consider all the evidence with an open mind. Poullada concludes with an eloquent defense of traditional Anglo-American standards of justice.

As Poullada repeatedly emphasizes, these postwar "war crimes" trials violated basic principles of justice. With specific examples, he shows how the prosecution has encouraged witnesses to give clearly false hearsay testimony evidence. With prosecution connivance, Poullada establishes, some witnesses gave demonstrably perjured testimony. He cites the case of a witness named Birin who helped to popularize the infamous lie that German women selected inmates to be killed so that their tatooed skins could be used as ornamental decorations.

Readers will note that many of the points and arguments presented here by Major Poullada are strikingly similar to those made over the years by Revisionist historians about the Holocaust extermination story.

Poullada was by no means the only American who was outraged at the great miscarriage of justice conducted in the name of the United States in these "war crimes" trials, in which the same victorious powers served as both judge and prosecutor. Charles Wennerstrum, for example, presiding judge in one of the Nuremberg trials, spoke out against the unwholesomely vindictive character of these proceedings, which served the purpose of vengeance much more than the cause of justice.

Fortunately for the defendants, the wartime American-Soviet alliance was already breaking apart by the time of the Nordhausen-Dora trial. German sensibilities had become more important and, as a result, defendants were treated more justly than had been the case in earlier postwar trials. Certainly the worst of all had been the great Nuremberg IMT trial of 1945-1946, in which Stalin's minions participated as equal partners with their American, British and French colleagues.

The American Army officers who served as judges in this case apparently were not unmoved by Major Poullada's arguments. Four of the 19 Nordhausen defendants—including "Mittelbau" general director Georg Rickhey—were found not guilty and acquitted. One defendant—SS First Lieutenant Hans Moeser—was sentenced to death by hanging. The

remainder were sentenced to prison terms ranging from five years to life.

An interesting footnote to this case: "Mittelwerk" operations director from September 1943 until April 1945—and Rickhey's subordinate—was Arthur Rudolph. After the war he moved to the United States, where he worked for the NASA space program. In 1969 he was honored with the NASA Distinguished Service Medal for his key role in developing the Saturn V rocket that put the first man on the moon. Some years later, in a case that attracted worldwide attention, the federal government's "Office of Special Investigations" threatened to prosecute Rudolph as a "war criminal" for misdeeds allegedly committed forty years earlier. He was obliged to give up his American citizenship in 1983 and was forced into exile in Germany. For more on the Rudolph case, see: Thomas Franklin, *An American in Exile* (1987) [available for purchase from IHR ($16.95)].

We are grateful to Mr. Joseph Halow for bringing Poullada's defense pleas to our attention. Halow had obtained a copy of this document while working as a young Army court reporter in the "war crimes" trials. Halow spoke about his experiences at the October 1990 IHR conference. His memoir, *Innocent in Dachau* (which deals at length with the Nordhausen case) will be published later this year by IHR.

If it please this honorable court, this court has heard very patiently the evidence in this case for the past eighteen weeks, and now it becomes the duty of this court to appraise, to ponder, to weigh this evidence carefully in arriving at its decision.

The proof in this case has been voluminous. It is of course necessary for the court to reject some of this evidence and to accept the remainder of this evidence with great caution. It would be folly for counsel for the defense not to imitate counsel for the prosecution and not discuss at great length the individual pieces of evidence which have been presented to this court. It is the opinion of the defense that when confronted with such a multitude of proof as this court has been presented with, it is necessary to resort to basic principles of justice and to obtain an overall picture of the proof as it has been presented according to whether or not

each piece of proof tends to tighten or to lessen the necessity of judicial proof. It is necessary for us not to lose sight of the forest because of the trees, it is necessary for us to avoid the fate of the inebriated man who, having run into a lamp post and was knocked down by the force of the blow, immediately arose and as he tried to leave, ran into the same lamp post again, repeating this procedure over and over until finally he was found by a policeman leaning against this post in great desperation muttering to himself, "Lost, lost in an impenetrable forest." We must avoid this "impenetrable forest" of only one pole and we must see our way clearly around the obstacles which have been presented in this case. Therefore it would be my endeavor to discuss the overall principles and general aspects of evidence, and I will tend[1] to do so under five general topics.

Concentration Camps in Law

I will discuss first of all the general nature and the problems incident to the operation of any concentration camp such as Dora. Secondly, I will discuss the organization and background of Dora itself and of Mittelwerke, without appreciation of which it is not possible for this court to arrive at a just decision. Thirdly I will discuss those factors affecting the credibility of the prosecution witnesses. In the fourth instance I will discuss the errors of presentation made by the prosecution, which the court should consider in arriving at a decision in this case. Lastly I would very briefly like to touch upon the principles of law and justice which must concern this court as they cover the immediate case involved.

Coming then first to the topic of the nature and the problems of the operation of a concentration camp such as Dora, I believe it is pertinent to discuss briefly some basic misconceptions which War Crimes courts have indulged in the past in considering these concentration camp cases. There seems to be something abhorrent about the term "concentration camp" in the connotation which this term has acquired for all of us which somehow is translated into the conception that a concentration camp, or the operation of a concentration camp, in and of itself, is illegal per se. Now, this is not the case. International law recognized fully the right of a sovereign state to intern those persons who, in the opinion of the authorities of this state, are inimical to its purpose and

threaten its welfare. We have done so in the case of the Japanese on the west coast when we removed them in large numbers into so-called relocation centers—a more euphemistic title perhaps—but nevertheless, a concentration camp.[2] We did so without giving them any trial, we confined them and we restrained their liberty. We did not consider that to have been an illegal act. It was a perfectly legal thing to do because our safety and our welfare were threatened by their presence on the Pacific coast.

Many states in the union keep prison labor camps. These prisoners are farmed out to industrial firms and they work for industrial firms and these firms in turn repay the state for the work of these prisoners. It is not the operation of a concentration camp or a relocation camp or whatever name we call it that is illegal, but it is the manner in which it is performed that may become illegal, and it is important to keep that distinction in mind.

Legality of Execution

The same type of misconception arises in connection with the term "executions." As my associate, Mr. Brook, has gone into this in some detail, I will cover it only briefly. However, it must be evident that each sovereign state has a right during the period of its sovereignty to set up its own constitution and its own laws, and executions which are prescribed pursuant to such constitution and such laws are perfectly valid and legal. The mere fact that their system does not accord or is abhorrent to our particular morals or principles or standards of conduct does not make the punishment which was ordered administratively illegal per se.

Perhaps I could illustrate that by an example. If we were at some time to occupy a country in which polygamy was lawful it would be a very, very strange thing indeed if we should declare that all marriages in that country were illegal because they conflicted with our Christian ideas and standards of morals. The legal expert, Dr. Pinder,[3] has testified before this court that punishments ordered by the Reich Security Main Office through the administrative determination of guilt were perfectly valid under the German codes of justice and the constitution as they existed at that time. Now an execution may be illegal if it is conducted without color of right, in that case it may be extremely illegal, but that is a distinction which

the prosecution has failed to make in this case. This is intimately connected with the question of the defense of superior orders. The worthy prosecutor defended a case involving superior orders so that I am sure that he is fully conversant with the law in this connection, that even under our strict interpretation of the defense of superior orders it is not correct to say that superior orders is never a defense and always only mitigation. Superior orders is mitigation when the order which was to be executed was flagrantly illegal in itself, but superior orders is a complete defense when the order given has the color of right and appeared to a reasonable person to have been a reasonable order.

For example, in the case of the six or seven Italians, these accused were subject to military control and were ordered to perform an execution which in all its appearances and trappings had the obvious flavor of a perfectly legal military execution. Superior orders in that case under our own law is a complete defense. Unless by some means those involved were put upon a warning that the execution flavored[4] of illegality superior orders must be a complete defense to this case. Now if the camp commander had come to one of the accused and said, "I am giving you an order to strangle a prisoner tonight in the dark when he comes around the corner of this house," and if that accused had executed the prisoner in this manner, superior orders would not be a defense to that type of execution because, by its very nature, by its very essence, it is not clothed with any color of right or with any semblance of that right. Those distinctions are important. The prosecution has accused us of making fine distinctions and, in our opinion, they are very important distinctions, and that is something which the prosecution does not do, and it is one of the fatal errors of their presentation, that they did not make distinctions but threw everything together in one pot and tried to come out with a total answer for everyone. If the court please, it is not possible to administer justice in that way.

Now as to whether or not the executions which were ordered for Dora were legal or not legal it is not difficult for us to say. We can say that the burden is on the prosecution to prove that they were not legal. Since they were colored with every vestige of that right and were trapped with all the panoply of that right, the burden is on the prosecution to show that they are illegal. There certainly was ample justification for them, if the court pleases.

The evidence before this court is clear that there was an armed and violent resistance movement at Dora. There is no question in anyone's mind on that. The people possessed weapons and possessed explosives and they intended to use them.

A question came up which I should like to discuss. That is whether an execution is justified when the sabotage is a mere plot and threat but is not actually committed. It must be evident to the court that in a top secret project such as the V-weapon plant, plotted sabotage, whether actually committed or not, was a severe offense. It is more than ample justification for a death sentence.

I would like to call this court's attention to a case which occurred in the United States with the avowed intention of committing sabotage of our war plants. These people never got any further than the beach before they were arrested. They did possess papers which showed their avowed aims and it was possible to prove that they intended to sabotage the war effort in America. The court will recall that by the fair and complete judicial process of the United States these people were tried and sentenced to death and they were executed. They never committed an act of sabotage and they never got as far as inside or near a top secret project. I dare say that if they ever did get near the atomic bomb plant with their plans they would have also been executed promptly.

Now in connection with the executions we should consider the subject of the mercy shot. It is an accepted, established military procedure and has never been considered or construed as an act of crime. It is what the name implies, an act of mercy to someone who has been been tried, sentenced and executed but who, for some reason, has not been completely killed, perhaps, by the act of execution. The only question then is whether the execution was legal in the first place. If the execution was legal then the act of mercy must also be legal, so we come back in a circle to the question of the legality of those executions and, if the court please, in view of the evidence, in view of the fact that the sentence was already read, in view of the fact that the witnesses were always present, a doctor was always present, an interpreter was always present, and they had all of the semblance of a legal execution, the burden of proof is upon the prosecution to show that those sentences under execution were illegal and that the accused knew of it or had reason to know. As to the

extra rations which were issued in connection with those executions, about which so much fuss was made, I believe the court has heard sufficient evidence to know that those were normal rations issued in the Wehrmacht as a matter of general custom and tradition to all persons who participated in the executions for the alleged reason to be able to counteract after a shot. It was not a war crime by any means but a custom and tradition.

Legality of Corporal Punishment

Now a similar misconception arises on the subject of beatings and corporal punishment. The defense readily admits that beatings and corporal punishment are abhorrent to our Anglo-American system of justice, although England used flogging to a very recent time as a method of punishment and still does so in the armed forces for some offenses. Some of our own southern states recognize corporal punishment as a proper means of discipline even at this date. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that in the overall picture the Anglo-American system abhors this subject of capital[5] punishment. This naturally creates a prejudice in our minds against any such act. However, we must come back to the subject, which is similar to the one of executions, that the Europeans have and have had a different attitude towards corporal punishment. There is a distinction, a very definite distinction, that we want to make between beatings and beatings.

There are beatings which were made for official reasons, for punishment prescribed by the Reich Security Main Office. The court has heard evidence that there were even forms which were made out and had to be signed by the physician. Now we certainly cannot quarrel with that system of punishment. We may not like it, we may not want to adopt it, but we cannot call it illegal just because we do not like it. If it was legal during the time it was perpetrated then it was legal. Further, there are differences between beating a person with a weapon and merely beating with the hand. There are very distinct differences which we make in our law between assault with a deadly weapon and assault and battery and simple assault and battery. Those are important distinctions and we do not want to make[6] them.

Thus we saw, for example, that the beatings which the accused, Buehring, admitted administering to those prisoners

during the course of these interrogations were authorized by Berlin as a means of breaking up this resistance movement and they were perfectly legal at the time, and the fact that we do not like them doesn't make a war crime out of it by any means. Furthermore, we must remember that these beatings were made under superior orders so that the accused Buehring, for example, had the double defense of the legality of the punishment he was administering and the fact that it was administered by superior orders and directly under the supervision of his superior, who was physically present or in the vicinity at all times. There has been evidence that in administering those punishments there were strict orders that no fatal injury should be inflicted and it was only natural in the course of these interrogations, as a dead witness was not a good witness. It is only natural that they should want him to live and not to injure him to the point of causing his death. The evidence has proved that the deaths which occurred in the bunker such as the death of Skinter and the four Russians, which were admitted by everyone in this case, were definitely proved to be committed by other people, and without the authority and consent of Sander, and in no way involved any of those accused in this case.

We have some curious quirks in our minds about this subject of beatings in connection with these war crimes. In war crimes courts in the past, the ability to show that an accused had been carrying a club at all times or at some time was equivalent to a conviction. If the court would care to cast its eyes around this room they will see at least two guards, American guards, with clubs in their hands. I dare say if these prisoners became unruly our American guards would use those clubs to keep them in line. So it is not, again, the carrying of a club which is wrong in any way, it is not equivalent to a conviction to show that a man carried a club. The question is, how did he use that club and on what occasions did he use that club, and that must be proved by individual acts and by witnesses testifying to individual acts and not by simply making a sweeping accusation because a person carries a club, therefore he is a beater and he should be convicted.

Also, an interesting thing in connection with these cases has to do with the developing of testimony in this case. In the early cases, when the courts were giving very severe sentences for

beatings, witnesses would get on the stand and testify as to beatings. The courts began to get weary[7] about this type of testimony, and they usually demanded, in order to give a severe sentence, that the element of death be involved as a result of such beatings. Immediately the testimony changed. The witnesses would get up on the stand and they would always have been witnesses to a beating which was so severe that they resulted in a person being carried to the dispensary and he was never seen again. The testimony always followed whenever the courts required it to get a conviction. Now we must remember, if the court please, that the penalty for even an aggravated battery with a deadly weapon in our own American courts would hardly ever merit more than a 10-year sentence.

The same type of misconception develops with the subject of cremation. Cremation always seems to be connected with something abhorrent and horrible. The prosecution has made a great case against the accused Maischein because he was supposedly present at cremations. Nothing is the matter with a cremation, if the court please. The finest cemeteries in America use cremations as a perfectly legal means of disposing of the remains of deceased individuals. Whether it is secret or whether it is public—what difference does that make, if the court please? If the person is dead and he is cremated it is not a crime. It can be no war crime to cremate anyone. The question must be, how did that person die, not how he was cremated. If any of the accused had something to do with the illegal death of an individual then he may be guilty of a war crime, but participation and attendance at a cremation in and of itself can certainly be no war crime or a crime of any kind. As we say, these distinctions are important.

Individual Responsibility

We have also been of the opinion at some time or another in the course of our lives that in concentration camps all prisoners were victims and martyrs and that all SS men spent all of their time swinging clubs beating prisoners brutally like sadists and that all of the prisoners were innocent victims. Well, the prosecution has made some statements about the fact that some of the guilty participants, in our opinion, are prominent prisoners.[8] We do not wish to shift any of the blame which any of the accused may have over to the prominent

prisoners, but we do believe it is important to the court in arriving at a just decision in this case to realize that not all is just the way it appears on the surface, but that there were feuds between the greens and the reds,[9] that these resulted in secret murders and resulted in secret courts which these prisoners themselves had, that everything became a racket in these concentration camps, that there was favoritism and bribery at every hand, that many prisoners lived at the expense of other prisoners, that the favored prisoners were assigned to cushy jobs such as in labor statistics and the dispensary, and that as a result a very vast black market arose in these camps.

Now perhaps it could be said that the SS are responsible for the system. That is true. We do not deny that. The persons who made the policies of these camps are certainly responsible. Pohl[10] and others who made the policies of these camps are certainly responsible. Pohl and others who made the policies for these camps and were tried at Nuremberg are undoubtedly responsible for a policy which would throw into the same camp individuals of varying nationalities and backgrounds, habitual criminals and political prisoners. It is obvious that under such a system a terrible situation would develop, but to say that and to say that these individual accused, the highest ranking of whom is a first lieutenant, are responsible for this system and are responsible for the conditions which arose as a result of this system—that, if the court please, is an entirely different matter. These people had very limited authorities. They could certainly not abolish the system. They could not say, "From now on the green prisoners will be in one camp and the red prisoners in another, and we will segregate these people." They could not stop the black market any more than we could stop the black market in Germany with the entire resources of our occupation army behind us. We cannot stop it. Those things arise as a result of conditions and once they arise the people in it cannot put a stop to it. They can try, and so these accused did try, but they certainly cannot be made to bear the entire brunt of the system as it existed.

We will leave the subject of the misconceptions which have arisen and I believe are important for the court to bear in mind. We must realize, just to summarize briefly, that the operation of a concentration camp or an internment camp, is

not illegal per se, that executions which were not illegal according to the laws and the constitution of the country at the time they were perpetrated could not become illegal by subsequent occupation of that country, and lastly that a large proportion of the unsavory picture of a concentration camp was brought about by the acts of prisoners themselves. If the court would keep these things in mind in arriving at their decisions they would have gone a long way towards eliminating the common misconceptions.

Importance of Dora to the War Effort

Let us consider, if the court please, the organization of Dora and Mittelwerke, and what the V-weapon program meant to Germany. It was the last hope of Germany. Goering's Luftwaffe had failed in its proud boast that not one bomb would fall upon German soil. The German armies were in full retreat in Africa and Russia. This resulted in a struggle for power between the high ranking officials in the German government, among them Speer and Himmler. It was obvious that if the war was won by means of this secret weapon, this V-weapon, the individual who could hold himself as responsible for successfully bringing this weapon to bear would have earned the undying gratitude of the German people and would have assured himself of a position as successor to Hitler. This resulted in a struggle for power over this weapon. There is no question about that. Officially the V-weapons belong to Speer, the Minister of Armaments, but Himmler had an ace up his sleeve in connection with this program. He had at his command a source of cheap labor, and cheap labor in the then German Reich, which had already scraped the bottom of its manpower barrel, was at a premium, so, using this cheap labor as a wedge, Himmler was also to get a stranglehold on the production of the V-weapons, and, although not officially, nevertheless through the means of men like Kammler and Sawatzki[11] he was able to get a dominant position in the V-weapon production. The Speer minister,[12] who appointed Rickhey, very definitely was being pushed into the background and into second place. It was Himmler's men who really pulled the strings and called the pace.

Now, this was a very important program. The policies for this program were not made by people such as these but were made by the top men in the German Reich. To say that for a program of this kind a technical sergeant was going to be

made responsible for all labor allocation is ridiculous, if the court please. Or the same is true of construction: to say that a master sergeant like Jacobi was to be placed in responsibility for all construction in a project of this kind is completely ridiculous. The evidence has shown that there were frequently inspections from Berlin, medical inspections, all types of inspections. Kammler came over often. Everything that came off in this camp as far as policy making was concerned was of the utmost interest to the top men in the German Reich. These people here were small fry. They were all placed in the position where they had to carry into effect these policies, and that is always an unenviable position for anyone. To say that a man like Detmers, who was a first lieutenant, had the power to declare executions and punish and disipline the prisoners, is like saying that some little security officer in the atom bomb plant would be given the authority to punish violators of security rules at his discretion.

Wartime Conditions

Now these policies which were made at top levels resulted in some very bad conditions. The defense has willingly admitted that. We have never claimed Dora to be a sanitorium, no question about it. It was a high priority project. German resources were pushed to the utmost to get this program started and as a result of that there was constant rush, they were in a hurry, and these bad conditions resulted, especially at the inception, because of the rush and hurry. But it is another thing to say that these bad conditions existed and another thing to say that because a certain individual was placed in the midst of these bad conditions he is responsible for them. Another lack of distinction. It is a very nice technique to make such a lack of distinction, no question about it. Prove bad conditions, that is the thing to do. Show that things are in a terrible state, then find a scapegoat for it and say, "He was there, therefore he was responsible." The court is expected to make the necessary logical connection between the two things, but is the connection there? That is the question which the court must ask itself. It is a funny technique. Hitler used it. That was exactly Hitler's technique to show that the Jews after the last war were responsible for all the evils which befell Germany. There were very bad conditions in Germany. The Jews were present. They made a

good scapegoat. You keep hammering away at that subject long enough and eventually the listeners will make the necessary connections. The Jews will be responsible. We say the prosecution has not met that burden of proof. It is not only necessary to place two things together and to assume that there is a connection; the connection must be proved. A very insidious note crept into the prosecution's case in this connection, in my opinion. It was stated and the court was led to believe that it was not only a matter for this court what the accused did or did not do, but what they should have done. That is the thing, the prosecution said, which condemns these people—what they should have done. Well, if the court please, that is a rather noble approach to any judicial problem. Unfortunately the principles of American criminal law do not support such a contention by the prosecution. A person is not guilty of a crime merely because his conduct is reprehensible or because he fails to act. He must have a duty to act, a very clear and definite duty to act. If he fails to act he may be a normal heel, but he is not a criminal. That is the law; it is very clear. I can see a beggar in the street in the most desperate condition of hunger and I can pass by without giving him a second look. Clearly, morality would demand that I help him, but I am not a criminal because I fail to do so. Some of the so accused did do a great deal towards helping prisoners, but if any of them had failed to do any of that, they certainly would not have been war criminals because of it. It so happens that a man like Fuchsloch followed his moral inclinations and did try to help. But he is not under absolute duty to do so by any means. The fact that he did do so is more to his credit, but so long as he would act within his proper sphere of duty and so long as he would refrain from a criminal act, that should be the determining factor before this court as far as any of these accused are concerned. They are under no legal duty to go out of their way and become proclaimers of the welfare of the human race. The law does not demand that of you, it does not demand that of me, and we should not demand that of these accused.

Now, the prosecution tried desperately to show that Dora was an extermination camp. Well, unfortunately the evidence just does not hold up. There are no gas chambers at Dora as in an extermination camp. We did not hear any evidence of medical experiments, such as have been put forth in all the

concentration camps practically so far. There were no wholesale executions at Dora such as Commando 99. The executions which took place at Dora were a result of this resistance movement and were not merely an attempt to exterminate in any way. Well, the reason is obvious, if the court please. I think Rickhey put it better than I could possibly do when he said it would be impossible to produce the weapons and destroy the workers. This was an important program. I do not say that it was not an extermination camp out of the good heart of the people who were making the concentration camp policies. It was a selfish thing of course, but it was not an extermination camp. It is true that in its inception bad conditions existed. There is no doubt about that. We are willing to concede that at any point in our argument, at any point in the case we are willing to concede that in the inception conditions were very bad, but I believe we should try to understand the normal point of view at that time. This project was a matter of vital military necessity. Under the guise of military necessity, a commander does not hesitate to send his own men to death if neccessary. When it becomes a question of national survival we do not stop to ask fine questions. The prisoners were asked to make sacrifices, definitely.

They were put into a place where the work was hard. It was mining work, work which is hard even under the best situations of freedom. If the court would care to examine the insurance risk rates for miners, underground workers, it would realize that it is always hazardous work, and I am not here to defend the morality or legality of demanding sacrifices from these prisoners. That is beside the point and not an issue in this case. I am simply trying to show the court why these bad conditions existed, and I do say that showing these bad conditions in itself is not enough, nor is showing why they existed enough. These accused did not make the policies which created these bad conditions. It is furthermore extremely necessary for the court to distinguish another distinction, between the period of early construction of prisoner work and the latter period when production got under way. The two things are very dissimilar and more and more different in more than one respect. The prosecution, of course, has attempted to show that it is all the same thing, but it is not.

So, if the court please, before passing on the next subject we have seen that certain misconceptions were prevalent as to the operation of all concentration camps in general, and I have tried to give the court a brief background of the operation of Dora, of the importance of the V-weapon project, and the reasons which caused the German state to embark upon such a project, and I have attempted to distinguish between the periods of time in the operation of this project, which the court should keep in mind.

Witness Bias

Now, I would like to discuss briefly, if the court please, the questions of the factors which affect the credibility of the prosecution witnesses. That question, of course, in the last analysis is the function of the court, but what criterion, what yardstick should the court use? Well, certainly a careful review of the testimony of the witnesses is called for, and examination of the motives of their testimony is certainly called for, and I believe we should consider briefly the principles of scientific criminology dealing with the unreliability of the human memory when testifying as to events which took place in the distant past.

Let us consider first the motives. That the witnesses for the most part were prejudiced I assume the court takes for granted. Is it possible for former prisoners to testify against their former jailers and not be prejudiced? Of course we can sympathize with them. I would be prejudiced myself. I am sure every member of the court would be prejudiced. But, if the court please, we must not let that affect the justice of the case. We must sympathize with them, yes, but the court must look upon this through the eyes of justice, not through the eyes of sympathy.

There is another element which is quite important in this case and quite evident, that is, the element of nationalities. Even under the best of conditions it is very difficult for a European of one nationality to testify against a European of another nationality and maintain a balanced attitude. It is difficult for us to realize the prejudice which existed in these countries—national hatred, biases, suspicions. We in America do not know anything about that. It is difficult in coming into a situation like this to understand the power behind such prejudice and bias. However, these war crimes courts must

ask themselves: Are we instruments of justice or are we instruments of national discriminations? Now in these concentration camps, these national hatreds were fomented. Prisoners from all countries in Europe were thrown in together in a dog-eat-dog situation and, unfortunately, these hatreds which grew up during the period of these concentration camps have not been allowed to subside, but former concentration camp inmates have formed themselves into organizations which, under the guise of being societies for mutual aid, actually have as their avowed purpose the preservation of these hatreds, this rancor which grew up before these concentration camps and during these concentration camps. These societies have a quasi-official status in a good many of these countries. Their officials hold key positions in the government of some of these countries, such as France and Czechoslovakia. We have seen some examples of these societies exercising pressure upon their members in testifying before courts where their former jailers are involved. They bring personal pressure, economic pressure and political pressure to bear on these witnesses. In America we would call that intimidation. In Europe it is realism. We saw during the trial the example of one witness who was intimidated to the point where he would not even testify before this court. I had asked this same witness to come back and had requested his presence through proper channels when we thought we would put on a rebuttal in this case. I received a letter from him of which I have a certified translation here. It is addressed to me, and he says:

> When I left Dachau on 20 November 1947, I was handed a written information by the defense reading that I was to report back as a witness to Dachau on 7 December 1947.
>
> I cannot appear as a witness for the following reasons:
>
> My passport was valid until the end of November 1947 only, for this reason I had to apply to the "Commission for the Investigation of War Crimes" at this place in order to obtain a recommendation for the Prague passport department to issue me a new passport valid until the end of December 1947.
>
> The "Commission for the Investigation of War Crimes" of this place, however, found out that I intended to go to Dachau as a defense witness. Since the above-mentioned commission is not in the least interested in these witnesses who go there to testify for the defense, it took a negative point of view as of the issue of my passport and did not give me the recommendation.

Consequently, the passport department did not issue me that passport without this recommendation.

For the above reasons I cannot come, and ask you to kindly arrange for the issue of my passport with our governmental agencies.

Hoping you will be so kind as to comply with my request, I remain

Very truly yours,
Josef Silvestr.

There we have an example of these national prejudices and how they have been used. It is only natural, I suppose, that these things would be as they are but nevertheless we must consider them. The prosecution witnesses have no such difficulty in appearing before this court. Two important things in my mind, if the court please, are that these societies condemn the accused not for their individual crimes but simply for the reasons of being Germans and having belonged to a certain class, the class who were their jailers. That to my mind is the insidious thing about them, not that they are prejudiced against individuals, that is only a natural thing when an individual has been guilty of some act of barbarism against you, but simply that they make these sweeping decisions that all of the people who belong to that class, regardless of innocence or guilt, fall within that prescribed category. Now, of course, these sweeping prejudices against people because of belonging to a class is one of the abhorrent principles of Hitlerism.

People like Cespiva and other officials of these societies do not know anything about sportsmanship. Hitler didn't invent this theory of condemning entire classes by reason of nationality or by reason of race or creed. He applied what was already a favorite European position. In addition to these national rancors, which resulted in matters such as the one I brought before this court, there is also this certain enmity that grew up in these camps as a result of membership in certain cliques in these camps. You either play ball or else you are an enemy. Thus we see that some prisoners who played along with them were placed in easier jobs, such as in labor statistics or in the dispensary.

Let us take Helbig for example. He was a fine man, Cespiva said when testifying against him, "He helped one of my friends," he testified. On the other hand Dr. Kahr testified

against Jacobi viciously because Jacobi hadn't played ball when Dr. Kahr wanted to furnish himself with a swanky apartment and Jacobi didn't want to let him have the materials. These things are retained in their minds, and petty minds bear petty grudges for a long time.

Witness Reliability

In addition to the prejudices which I have already named, that is the prejudice of former prisoners of their jailers, the national hatred and these prejudices which arise by reason of membership in societies destined to foment national hatreds, and membership in camp cliques, we must realize that very little credibility can be given to the prosecution witnesses by reason of the fact that all the events that they testified to happened a very long time ago. The fragility of the human memory has almost been commented upon by the prosecution when the prosecutor admitted that five minutes after an incident had occurred it would hardly be remembered afterwards, and with him all psychological criminologists are in complete agreement.

I am sure this court is familiar with the classroom experiment, the classical experiment in which the professor is droning away, lecturing to the class and suddenly two men burst into the room. One flashes a gun, another has a knife. There is a great commotion. The two men leap out of the window. The professor is knocked down on the floor. Then immediately thereafter he arises and explains to the class that this was all prearranged, and then a set of questions is asked of the class as to just what happened. "Describe the men. Describe what they did." Well, I have seen the results of such an experiment myself and I know that these members of the court who have seen the results of such an experiment would remember the amazing results, the amazing discrepancies. Some people will answer that there were three women involved, and others will say the professor was the one who drew the knife. Completely unbelievable answers. The reason for that is very simple.

I should like to read just briefly to the court volume 29 of *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, page 371. There is a report of a carefully controlled experiment in which a crime is staged and a large number of witnesses were immediately divided into a smaller number of groups. Each group is asked that they make a report which consisted of

answering questions similar to the ones they would have to answer if they would appear in court to testify. Each group, however, was questioned at different intervals of time. The purpose was to test the effect of the passage of time on the powers of observation and memory. Among the scientific conclusions quoted in this journal are the following, and I quote:

> The number of correct answers to all types of questions was decidedly low, irrespective of the time elapsed between the event and the reporting thereof. However, testimony given seven weeks after the event was much more variable than that given one week after. Of the factors tested, the ability to recollect who the participants in the crime were and to describe them was the least reliable and the most likely to be effaced by the passage of time.
>
> If justice in our courts is to depend upon the testimony of witnesses, that testimony must be brought in early and even then accepted with wide allowance for error explainable in terms of faulty sense perception and memory. In our present system, days, and even months sometimes intervene between an accident or crime and the witnesses' appearance in court.

End of quote.

To which, if the court will permit, I would like to add, too, the events about which the prosecution witnesses testified did not happen days, weeks or months, but years ago, and yet we have had prosecution witnesses sit in this chair behind me, and they have identified accurately individuals whom they have seen only once, and they describe everything in detail, exactly what he did, what he said.

Well, the legal authorities, the psychological scientists, the sociologists all have given their earnest effort and study to this problem, the unreliability of witnesses' testimony after the passage of time. I could cite authority to this court for hours on end and all of them would be unanimous in saying to this court: "Beware the testimony of witnesses who purport to remember with any degree of accuracy events which happened two or three years ago."

Here is an extract from volume 28 of the *American Sociological Society Publications*, page 45, and I quote:

> Nearly all studies indicate that memory loss is greatest within the first few hours after observation, and that two-fifths of the personal experiences are totally lost in a two week period.

Robert M. Hutchins and Donald Slesinger, writing in the law review of the Law School which our worthy prosecutor attended, in an article entitled "Some Observations on the Law of Evidence," 41 *Harvard Law Review*, 860, stated their conclusion at page 864 as follows:

> Turning now to past recollection recorded and the psychological theory of the fallibility of memory on which it rests, we discover the psychologists, like the judges, emphasizing the importance of the time between an experience and its report both agree that as time goes on an experience is forgotten until little remains in most cases but conjectures and surmisals.

Now, doesn't that describe the testimony of the prosecution witnesses—conjectures and surmisals?

The distinguished psychologist William H. Roberts, writing on the subject of memory, says, and I quote:

> When we try to recall past experiences our images are limited in most of us to items to which we have given definate attention. That is one reason why testimony in court is so often inaccurate. The witness has rarely had any warning that something important was about to happen. He has not been instructed for what he should watch; so very often he fails to observe the crucial point. No determination to tell the truth (very often he fails to observe the crucial point), no agonized going over the scene again and again can recover the essential point that the witness simply cannot recall because of faulty observation and faulty recollection.

Then Mr. Roberts quotes Mr. Wigmore. Mr. Wigmore is perhaps the world's greatest authority on evidence. He wrote the evidence section in our *Manual for Courts Martial.* He says:

> In the last analysis, as Mr. Wigmore so often says, the reliability of the testimony of a witness depends on two factors: "Does the witness want to tell the truth, and can he tell the truth?" The first depends on the bias, interest and prejudices of the witness, the latter depends on psychological laws of observation which are entirely beyond the control of the witness. Memories play strange tricks on witnesses. Details are both lost and added. Sometimes they honestly remember things that never happened. Honest witnesses before trial often say "I do not know whether I actually remember this, or only think I do, because I have been told about it so often." Interesting stories frequently grow with successive tellings, though witnesses have no intention to embellish them.

And I close the quote.

Now, I take the liberty of putting this question to the court: Taking into consideration the elements which I have discussed, the obvious[13] and which are set forth before the court after a long interval of time from the events about which the testimony deals with . . . [*Sic*].

Use of Hearsay

Well, as if these factors were not enough to make this testimony unreliable, we here in War Crimes have opened the door wide to the greatest perverters of justice—our friends here say "evidence."

In ordinary trials before American or English courts the dangers of fabrication and invention and perjured testimony are to some extent restrained by making a witness testify only what he personally knows. Centuries of trial have shown the wisdom of these courts. It has been said that this hearsay rule has been relaxed in administrative cases in America, and therefore, it should be perfectly proper to relax it in this case. If the court please, that could not deal with criminal matters, in the first place; and in the second place, lives of men are now at stake. Every civilized country in the world requires in a murder case that at least the death be proved by first-hand official evidence. This is the so-called and much misused phrase *corpus delicti*. You must show that a death occurred, and hearsay evidence in every civilized country in the world is not admissible to show the death.

In these courts prejudice, bias, passage of time, hearsay, are combined to encourage a witness to rationalize, to invent testimony. The way that rationalization works is very simple. Just assume for a minute that I am a Polish witness and I am called upon to stand and testify against Jacobi, let's say. Now I don't remember Jacobi. I only saw him once, but I do remember something about the construction details of Camp Dora. There were such details. I remember that beatings occurred. I remember that somewhere along the line two or three of my friends had been beaten in the course of his detail. Naturally, I am prejudiced. Centuries of national hatred are in me, and with some reason. I don't like Germans in general, and I don't like SS men in particular; so it is a very simple matter to rationalize. I know that Jacobi was in charge of these construction details. He must have beaten somebody. I can sit

on this stand and say "Yep, definitely, Jacobi beat one of my friends." Well, of course, I have to make the story good, so, "He beat them so they fell down. He was taken to the dispensary, and I never heard of him again." Oh, my conscience may bother me a little at nights, that I testified against an individual who perhaps was innocent, but after all, he is an SS man, he is a German. Maybe if he didn't do that he may have done something else which was just as bad.

Now, that is the way people rationalize these things. Is there any doubt that many of these stories have been concocted just that way? And unfortunately, I have not only heard witnesses talking that way, but I have heard American officers talking exactly the same way. That may be mass-scale revenge. It is not justice—the individual innocence or guilt of one of these accused.

Now, in any trial which was conducted before an American court, the rules of evidence which pertain in the Anglo-American system, this story could be checked. It wouldn't stand up for the simple reason that they couldn't prove that the death ever occurred. But in War Crimes trials our Polish witness, whom I used for my example, is perfectly in the safe. He can spin his yarn with complete impunity. Does he have to describe with exactitude the cause of the death? No. Is it necessary for him to even have seen the body? No, certainly not. Does he even have to know the name of the victim? Oh, no, just his nationality, and he knows that because he is a Pole. The gates are wide open and prejudice and faulty memory can run rampant. You can chalk up one more hanging in the game of hate and revenge. It has been suggested that it would not be possible to get convictions without admitting this type of evidence. I say to the court "Do we seek convictions or do we seek justice? Must we sell our birthright? Must we emasculate our legal system in order to convict a few men and obtain revenge?" This choice, this choice, if the court please, with convictions at any price, "Are they worth dispensing without judicial safeguards?," is as old as the history of tyranny.

Every policeman who has ever aspired to become a dictator has urged that criminals will escape if the safeguards are not swept away. It is exactly the same thing which the Gestapo and the GPU and the NKVD urged and continue to urge today. It is the very thing that these war crimes trials were set up to condemn. Now, this court can't change the ground rules upon which these courts are held, I realize that, but it can exercise

its God-given right to recognize the insidiousness of such hearsay proof, and to reject the evidence based upon them as worthless. I say you not only can, you should, you must refuse to become the instruments of revenge, and maintain your integrity as instruments of justice. If there are any lengthy doubts in the mind of any member of this court as to the worthlessness of this type of hearsay evidence, we can dispel them by saying in this trial, "where it was possible to test this hearsay evidence, we did." We had such cases in this very trial. I will mention only a few.

Zwiener said that he had heard from Finkenzeller that Rickhey had given capos[14] orders to beat prisoners. It was possible for the defense in this case to bring Finkenzeller on the stand. Did Finkenzeller remember any such thing? No. Bouda said that he heard from Kurzke that Kurzke was the doctor who had treated the two men who died as a result of a shot from Helbig. Kurzke got on the stand and didn't remember saying anything like that to Bouda. He never treated anybody who died. Why he saw Helbig at Belsen, but completely failed to substantiate Bouda's testimony. There are many other cases, but I won't burden the court with them at this time; but in every single case in which it was possible during this trial to pin down the sources of hearsay evidence, it failed to pass the test completely. Is there any doubt, if the court please, that fabrications based on these elements, national prejudice, faulty memory, and supported by hearsay evidence should be thrown out of this court, as they should be thrown out of any court in the land which pretends to dispense justice.

There is one thing about this testimony that is doubly dangerous. It is not like pure fiction, it is more like a historical novel, because it has a certain foundation in fact, and thereby it gets a certain amount of credibility attached to itself. These witnesses do know the conditions, general conditions, they do know the place, they know the time, they can give, in general, evidence which sounds credible, so it isn't pure fiction—it is a historical novel. That terminates my discussion of the factors which affect the credibility of the prosecution witnesses.

Credibility of Individual Witnesses

This consideration, however, of these factors enables us to classify these witnesses, as the prosecution attempted to

classify the defense witnesses, drawing those contrasts which the prosecution attempted to draw. First of all, in classifying the prosecution witnesses, I would say that we would have to come to the deliberate liars, of whom there were some.

Maubert – "There were no beds in the TB block." A conscious, deliberate lie for the purpose of revenge.

Rozin – Heinrich was supposed to have beaten people to death. Of course he made two mistakes. He mistakenly coupled that testimony with the fact that the air-raid shelter was under construction, and it was possible to prove that the air-raid shelter had been built for several months; and also, he made an important mistake. He forgot the nationality of these people, he said they were Hungarian Jews. Well, if the court please, the law on the question of the nationality of these victims is quite clear. In the review of the parent Dachau case, the reviewing authorities said the following: "Be it noted that this testimony is general, and we are only concerned with cases where Allied or co-belligerent nations were subjected to offenses against the laws of war."

Here it must be said that an error was definitely committed by the court in taking judicial notice of the fact that Hungary and also the Gypsies were at war with Germany. Furthermore, the question of whether given victims were subject of Allied or co-belligerent powers was not properly considered by the court on many occasions, since it took notice of the war between Germany and other powers, some of which, such as Austria and Czechoslovakia, had disappeared as sovereign states.

So our witness Rozin didn't get the right nationality because Hungarian Jews, if the court please, cannot be considered as proper victims in these war crimes cases. They are outside the jurisdiction of the court because they still maintain their Hungarian nationality; because Hungary was an ally of Germany, and not a co-belligerent or an ally of the United States.

And then we come to the third deliberate liar, Drung. After the man had been proved a perjuror, the prosecution still maintains that he was their star witness, the man who sat here and mocked the justice of this court by telling deliberate lies under oath. The prosecution says that this man who sat here for three days and whose every answer was "Ja, aber –" gave very clear and succinct answers, a deliberate liar without a shadow of doubt.

Doctor Kahr, another deliberate liar. Of course his motivation was slightly different. He said that he had never interrogated witnesses. We confronted him with a record of his interrogation of an accused. He, of course, was buying his life and he had to do it with lies. He knew that he and Doctor Kurzke personally had selected thousands of people on these transports, and it was only by reason of the fact that he had purchased his liberty that he was not sitting in the dock.

Doctor Kurzke, of course, deliberately lied about some points, but this particular witness was not malicious. He was just afraid, testified from fear.

Doctor Cespiva, the deliberate liar. We must classify him as such. That witness feels a compulsion to destroy any witness who was present at the times he betrayed his Russian comrades. His position in Czechoslovakia demands this. He can't afford to have witnesses alive who knew he was guilty of betrayal of those Russians. He showed his true color when he tried to intimidate and interfere with the defense witnesses. He went a little too far.

I am not going to attempt to list all these witnesses by class, but just give outstanding examples.

The second class I call "the exaggerators." Not deliberate liars, they are just dramatists. They dramatize their concentration camp experiences. They were martyrs, heroes. All their accounts are surrounded by an aureola and glamor of fiction, and to a large extent that is what it is, too, fiction.

Jay, the Englishman. He was dying of thirst. He had to drink urine. For the first six months nobody had anything to drink. No one could take a bath. All this matter is completely contradicted by the prosecution witnesses at a later time.

Ackermann, the pseudo-doctor. He had performed thousands of autopsies, Ackermann had. He could tell by looking at the cell tissues whether a man died of exhaustion or not, a feat which even the finest histologist with all the resources, with all the resources of a well-equipped laboratory would find difficult to do.

Michel, a man of iron. He was beaten over the head with clubs by two men, kicked in the genitals, his spine was broken, lay a cripple, beaten until he was bloody, when he walked by himself without any help for over 500 meters, which is about half a kilometer into the tunnels.

To this class also belongs Kassimatis, the Greek. He went everybody a little better. Not only weren't there any trials at these executions, there weren't even any interrogations, nothing. A man was caught with a piece of wire on his shoe laces and he himself saw two SS men string them up from a beam which does not exist in the ceiling.

Cespiva himself falls into this class of exaggerators and dramatists. He was attacked by this ferocious dog Ajax, which turns out to be a puppy who went around pulling people's cuffs.

There is another example of these exaggerators and dramatists, and that is my worthy co-religionist, Brother Birin. This man, cloaking his hatred, his national hatred, under a hypocritical air of Christian charity, indulged in the wildest speculation, in flights of fancy, that it has ever been my privilege to hear. He gave accurate testimony of the death rates for the first six months of Dora. Of course, he arrived in March 1944, by his own testimony. We present him with a copy of the prosecution's exhibit on death rates, and he promptly pronounced it false.

Of course, minor inconsistencies never trouble the mind of a man who is intent on producing, not inconsistent facts, but fiction. I would like to read to you just a brief excerpt from this little book written by friend Birin. It is called *Sixteen Months of Imprisonment.* It is widely circulated in France. It is in French. It tells about his experiences in Dora. The part that I have selected is the part in which he describes roll calls at Dora. He says:

> During roll calls, the wives of the SS also selected their victims and they did so with even more cynicism than their husbands. They sought beautiful human skins artistically tattooed. In order to please them, a special roll call was often held on the roll call square at which all prisoners had to be present, dressed like Adam. Then these ladies passed in review through the ranks making their selections as in a fashion show. One could hear their titters, their exclamation, their small laughter of satisfaction. They would murmur, "Das ist schön," and they would point their fingers at the object of their choice.
>
> The prisoners thus selected had to leave the ranks and soon thereafter their skins were adorning the living rooms of these ladies or were added to the camp collection.

Now that is a verbatim translation. This book was written by friend Birin, that exaggerator and dramatizer. Now, we have

heard voluminous testimony in this case. Certainly if any such a thing would have happened in Dora it would have been presented to this court. Most of us recognize the Ilse Koch incident at Buchenwald, and he passes it on as Gospel truth in France, and they read this book and they have it on the same level as the Gospel of St. Mark.

I ask the court what credibility can be given to the testimony of such witnesses who put such stuff like that out as fact? It shows what a clever dramatizer can do. This is just an example of the dishonest testimony of this witness. The book is full of them, and it is recommended reading for this court.[15]

The next class that I would like to mention are the guilty ones. These people who were so guilty themselves that they felt compelled to come before this court and accuse the people in this dock in order to satisfy their own sense of guilt. We come to some of them, Drung, Cespiva—very definitely in an attempt to pass off their guilt on to these accused. Mittermüller, who had to be dragged out of the Dachau jail in order to testify before this court. Müller, known as the Tiger of Eschnapur, given 25 years by another war crimes court, Wyglondaz, known in Dora as Aunt Johanna, notorious spy for Sander.

And Doctor Kahr again, very definitely trying to hide his guilt by assisting the prosecution in obtaining convictions. We just have to look at one testimony of Doctor Kahr to see the extent to which he will go. That was the testimony in regard to the conditions of the transports which were sent from Buchenwald to Dora. In the Buchenwald case, where he was still trying to buy his liberty, it was Buchenwald's fault; ninety percent of the people who were sent to Dora were so far beyond recovery they were destined, doomed to die. It was well known that Buchenwald was the principal source of prisoners for Dora. If that was so, then the death rate of Dora is completely exonerated. These accused can't be held responsible for a death rate in a camp where ninety percent of the people who were sent to them were already dying. The Dora case is entirely different. These people arrived in fine condition from Buchenwald. Only subjected to the torturous hours and the hard work at Dora is why they developed a high death rate and died. It was the work in the tunnels that killed them. You see, gentlemen, it just depends on which case you testify for—a witness like that.

The next class of witnesses for the prosecution is the ignorant, the confused, little man who had no sense of perspective, no background, no education. Ordinarily we would speak of them as having a worm's eye view, but in the case of the prosecution it was more a snake's eye view.

These people are not deliberate liars. They just can't tell the difference between truth and falsehood. You just can't blame them for not testifying accurately, but I certainly blame an intelligent and enlightened prosecution for encouraging such types to appear before a court and give testimony as to matters entirely beyond their possible knowledge. Look at their names: Seidel admitted, punch-drunk—admitted he was confused in three languages. Bloch and Stern, two nice Jewish boys, cooked up their story on the train coming down. Bernhardt, he was certain that Brinkmann was the official hangman. That was the point he had. No other witness ever saw Brinkmann acting as official hangman during the time he was at Ellrich. Junk, from his exalted position in the kitchen, testified as to all the inner workings of the Mittelwerke, all of the secret work that went on in the Gestapo office, knew exactly what Rickhey was doing every period of the day. This type of witness can testify with great authority about all the secret works, the exact details of administative channels as high as Berlin, thus demonstrating their ignorance.

Another class of witnesses, those which were compelled by just pure national hatred such as Bouda, a Czech who was known as "Lucy" in Dora, showed that he was prompted by hate and malice. The same is true for the French witnesses. Rozin, Maubert, and Chamaillard, the latter being the witness who was so blinded by hate that he definitely identified the accused Ulbricht as being one of the perpetrators of the Gardelegen affair, though, fortunately, we were able to prove to the contrary.[16] That is not always possible with this type of witness. We can't always do that. In this particular case we were able to bring documents and witnesses to show how completely wrong he was. If it hadn't been for that, I am sure he would have had Ulbricht as being at this Gardelegen massacre. It shows the danger of accepting the statements of any of these witnesses at their face value.

Well, there they are, if the court please, the witnesses for the prosecution on parade, the deliberate liars, the exaggerators, the stupid, the ignorant, the guilty ones who are trying to hide

their own guilt, these who are blinded by national hate. It is not a very pretty picture. "Let he who is without sin throw the first stone." But candor compels and justice does require that we recognize a small residue of the prosecution witnesses. They are at the rear of the parade. They are not very glamorous. They have the exotic virtue of trying to tell the truth. These men showed themselves to be men of balance by their attitude, by the positions which they have acquired after they have been released from the concentration camp. They are not out for revenge. This residue is insignificant, it is true, in numbers; but by contrast, it emphasized the worthlessness of the rest of the prosecution witnesses. I will refer to just a few. Colonel Leschi, who is now chief of the radio communications for all of France. The Polish witness Vincent Hein, the Polish reparations commissioner, Dr. Groenveld, the Mennonite. The religious steadfastness of this man compelled him to tell the truth as far as he knew it.

Dr. Groenveld even accused himself as being responsible for selecting prisoners to go on transports, which he did. He also accused himself of keeping his friend Ives in the hospital for the major part of his time in Dora when only[17] other people who were really dying were kept out, because of friendship. This witness was making an attempt to tell the truth.

The interpreter Patzer, now at the University of London, this man confirmed that not one single death occurred as a result of interrogations in the bunker.

Now I implore the court to review carefully the testimony of that type of witness for the prosecution—they at least made attempts to present a balanced and sane picture. Of course they were mistaken in many cases. We have already seen what the frailities of human memory will do. We must conclude, if the court please, that except for a small residue of prosecution witnesses, this court should reject as mistruth the testimony of the remainder because of the fact that they were prejudiced, because of the fact of faulty memory and of the time which has elapsed, because most of the testimony was based on hearsay, most of them either deliberate liars, exaggerators, guilty themselves and covering up, guilty and confused, or blinded by national hate. All of these above factors in connection with the incredibility of prosecution witnesses should be considered.

Prosecution Errors

But there is even more. There are fatal errors in the manner in which the prosecution presented its case, which must throw very great doubts on the testimony presented. In the first place, it is evident that the prosecution was over-zealous in presenting its case, to say the least. I think, as Bühring so aptly put it, the prosecution was interested in hearing accusations, not the truth. I won't review for this court the ways in which the statements were obtained from these accused. The court heard enough about that from Bühring during the trial, the witnesses who were permitted to, who were interrogated, and explanations which were omitted.

Now the prosecution also withheld favorable evidence when it is the duty of the prosecutor to present all of the evidence in order to give a clear picture. Of this there can be no doubt. On several occasions when due to our objections the prosecution inadvertently was forced to present a subject as the Gardelegen report, it presented to the court an entirely different picture from what the prosecution was trying to make. It showed where the real responsibility for the Gardelegen incident lay. It showed that Brauny certainly could not be held as the principle character for that incident, if at all.

In the case of Brauny, of course, it is a case of "Damned if you do, and damned if you don't." If he stayed with the transport and massacred them you were guilty, then you couldn't win. If you left them, then you are a coward. You shouldn't have left them. That is a position in which I hope no member of this court or I want to be put.

That the prosecution indulged in over-exaggerations, is, of course, evident to everyone. He maintained this position during the entire case and maintained this position yesterday in his argument. According to the prosecution every single one of those accused is a mass murderer, every one of them, without any qualification, for one reason or another.

If the court please, that weakens any case. When a man makes up his mind to hang every individual, then he is going to fall into some fatal errors in his presentation, and the prosecution did just that. The prosecution took the attitude that they should make no attempt to differentiate between places and names, in order to use casual words like "tunnels" to include construction sites, the "Mittelwerke factory"—every

place where prisoners worked were "the tunnels," they made no attempt to distinguish between dates.

Even yesterday in its final argument it was said that Rickhey's witnesses were complaining about the long roll calls, and therefore that showed that Koenig was guilty.

The court knows very well that Koenig was in the motor pool at the time Rickhey came to the Mittelwerke. Rickhey came to the Mittelwerke in May, and at that time Koenig had been in the motor pool for four months.

No attempt to distinguish Jews, and an attempt to show up a smoke screen of accusations—this constant repetition of an error. That is a theory—constantly repeat an error and eventually that makes it true. That was Goebbels' technique. Keep piling up accusations—no matter whether they are true or false. Eventually they will be believed.

Now, accusations are easy to make. They are very difficult to disprove. Just keep calling the accused a murderer over and over again. That is the way to do it. This shows how easy it is to make sweeping accusations, if the court please. The same thing is true with the way they couple prejudicial matter which is entirely irrelevant. The horror picture of the bombing victims of the Boelke Kaserne, deliberately introduced to build up a prejudice against the accused Schmidt, in the hope that somehow the accused Schmidt would be found to have some participation in these deaths, which were actually the result of our own bombings.[18]

It is this desire, if the court please, this desire to exaggerate, at all costs, to present evidence at all costs, no matter how worthless it is, that led witnesses such as Zwiener to appear before this court and testify invented testimony.

Now, the prosecution, of course, claims that they had no connection with the testimony which Zwiener invented, that they had nothing to do with his inventing that testimony, but I believe an interesting parallel can be drawn here. Very briefly, I would like to draw this parallel. The prosecution says, "We are completely innocent of having participated in inventing testimony." I do believe it. I know the court believes it. But we must recognize that a much stronger case could be made against the prosecution to prove that they did assist in inventing this testimony than any case that they have prosecuted against any single one of those accused, and that shows the danger of just making accusations and it should

show the prosecution the danger and how easy it is, by hearsay testimony and by appearances, to show that a guilt exists.

Let us look at the facts. The facts are as admitted before this court. The prosecution and Zwiener were in contact through Mr. Aalmans—that is admitted. Zwiener told another member of the accused of his inventions, of what he intended to do and if the Big Four didn't hang, that then the little prisoners would hang. Zwiener did, in fact, manufacture the testimony. He passed it—actually that is admitted by the prosecution through Captain Ryan. Zwiener made other attempts to pass this information to the prosecution. Then, when the prosecution brought this testimony forth in open court through the accused, Zwiener, by means of a very clear and smooth presentation on direct examination that the prosecution made of Zwiener, in cross examination it was very evident to every member of this court.

There it is—a much stronger case than anything that has been presented by the prosecution against any of these accused. If the prosecution is innocent, as I am sure it is, one may well judge how easy it is for a miscarriage of justice to occur and how easy it is to be thought guilty on evidence based upon accusations of prejudiced witnesses, which is buttressed by hearsay. All the elements are there and admitted, just as the prosecutor said yesterday before this court, that all the elements in Helbig's case were admitted because he was present at Belsen, because he had a pistol in his hand, because he was seen by Dr. Kurzke—every single element is present.

A Plea for Justice

I would like to close now, if the court please, with a sincere plan for the court to give those accused justice in this case. I do not want to make a plea for mercy because justice metes out the punishment that is deserved, no more, no less. The defense is not so naive and has not been so naive during this entire case as to claim that all of these people were completely innocent. We do not so claim now. Many of them have been guilty of criminal acts. Many of them have admitted it before this court, such as beatings, but they are not all murderers. Some of them are completely innocent and we respectfully request this court to take into consideration in bringing in

their verdict these exaggerations that have been presented against these people—against these people who have not received a fair trial.

Now, I do not want to be misunderstood. I am proud to say that every one of these accused has had a fair hearing before a court which has been scrupulously fair, but in our Anglo-American system, a fair hearing before a fair court is not an entirely fair trial. It is only part of a fair trial. What goes on before the trial is just as important as a fair hearing before a fair court. We cannot speak of a fair trial, when accused are denied the elementary rights—pre-trial rights I am speaking of—which any gangster or any common criminal would enjoy before an American court. What takes place before the trial and the type of evidence admissible at the trial are just as important as a fair-minded court. The argument that if the positions were reversed and that if we were being tried by them, we wouldn't get as fair a trial as they did, is cowardly as an answer. Two wrongs have never made a right. It is just the pot calling the kettle black. Regardless of what they would have done, it is not justified of us to do likewise. How can we demand, if the court please, the strictest standard of conduct and morality which the prosecution has said we must use in judging these men? How can we demand these standards which we have inherited from our free laws and our free institutions and at the same time deny them the fundamental rights which our free laws and our free constitution give to people who must live by these strict standards? These people didn't learn their standards of conduct in baseball fields or cricket fields or the football fields of free countries. They learned them in an atmosphere of terror. We refuse to take this into consideration and if we do so, we then are consciously lowering our standards of justice in order to get a transitory revenge on a few suspected criminals.

Duty to History

In these War Crimes trials, this being the last one, we are writing history. We forget this—it is easy to forget in the daily grind, the routine, the heat of the case—it is easy to forget that we are writing international law and history in these trials. I ask this court to rise above the daily grind, to separate themselves from this particular trial and the day-after-day hearing of this evidence and to see itself in the position and the perspective which history gives to it. The precedents that

we set in this court will outlive every member of this court. The lives and the fortunes of those accused are unimportant. The great cases in the law which have assured our great rights have always involved little people, little people who have long since departed from our field of view. The right of redress against a sovereign state was laid down in the Winslow Case, the case of a small boy who was accused of stealing some postage stamps from another boy; the case which upheld the freedom of the press was the case of an obscure publisher in the colonies of a magazine which has long since ceased even to be read in the United States. The freedom of religion was upheld in a case in which an obscure sect was involved, whose name is no longer even known.

I dare to utter a prophecy to this court. The decision to try these War Criminals, under rules which offered them less protection than those which we extend to our own citizens when accused of crime, established a precedent in international law which will live to haunt the world.

The argument is made on the basis of expediency. It is said that those people could not be tried if we did not deprive them of these safeguards. To this, the wise men of the law have always answered that expediency is not a substitute for justice. Expediency is always the first step on the road to totalitarianism. This philosophy that the ends justify the means—that is the philosophy of Machiavelli and of Hitler.

I am most grateful for the opportunity to be able to stand before this court and repudiate this philosophy as abhorrent to our free institutions, which have been nurtured by our Anglo-American tradition and our American system. I do not believe in one law for our friends and a different law for our enemies. I hold no personal grief[19] for these men. They were my enemies for[20] a short while ago. What their fate is, is entirely immaterial to me, but historically such distinction results inevitably in invasions of our most precious liberties. The law means the same for all. We must extend the same protection to the criminal, to the innocent, to the citizen, to the alien, to the Christian, to the Jew. A denial of these basic rights to any group on whatever grounds, expediency or otherwise, in order to produce quick results, destroys the foundations of the law and its strength. I say I am happy to have the opportunity to repudiate this theory before this court because I know that as surely as we deprive this group today of the basic safeguards which we grant our own citizens, tomorrow we

will deprive it from the Jew or from the Catholic, as I am, and I oppose it with all my strength.

Historically the law did not become a shield or sword for freedom until it became a way which was common to all men, to the prince, to the pauper, to the Jew, to the Christian, until it became known as "The Common Law," without distinction as to race or creed or the fact that they were former enemies.

These small perversions which are introduced and which have been introduced into these War Crimes Trial cases may seem unimportant. Suppression of liberty always brings with it small invasions of basic rights. The Nazi whom we are trying in Germany today began in that way, by invading a few basic rights to a very insignificant extent, as any German can now tell you—before they knew it, their entire system had snowballed into a murderous avalanche which buried freedom. I report, when we consciously abandon our strong moral position as a democracy by laws in order to assure a few convictions, then we, and not the accused, are on trial, are the real betrayers of our system and our ideals. I report,[21] I don't care what happens to those accused. I have no personal grief[22] for them of any kind but I, you and everyone here do have very high stakes in the birthrights which this court is here to guard and to preserve and to enforce. I feel inadequate to impress upon this court the importance of these principles. I wish that I could summon up the wise men of the law who have preceded me. Coke and Allenborough and Marshall and Holmes, and have them appear before you and and say these things to you in a way far superior to anything which I can utter. I wish that I could summon the conscience of the American people, the voice of their conscience, to speak through me to tell you these things.

The defense is often accused of flagwaving. I am not a flagwaver. A flagwaver uses hypocritical patriotism to cloud the real issue. Here the real issue is not clouded. It is clear, it is expediency or justice. The strength of our democracy lies in the very fact that I, an American, am called upon to defend, through no personal desire of mine, these Germans, my former enemies, and that I can criticize the case which has been presented against them. But it also lies, if the court please, in the ability of each court member to follow the dictates of its own conscience. This court cannot give these men a fair trial. I have made that plain. But they can give

them—and I know they will give them—a fair decision. Your duty is very simple. It may seem complicated but it is simple. Just ask yourself—would you be willing to be placed on trial for your life and would you be willing to stake your life upon the type of evidence that has been presented by the prosecution before this court? Would you be willing to have your citizens, citizens of your own country, appear before a court martial or before an American court, and subjected to the kind of prejudice and perjured evidence which has been presented against these accused? Do you consider that the evidence produced by the prosecution against each of these accused would find them guilty beyond reasonable doubt before an American court, using the system and the principles of our Anglo-American free system of laws? Using that criterion, if the court please, it is clear that nearly all the accusations of the prosecution must fall below such standards of proof.

Notes

Major Poullada's final plea in the Nordhausen-Dora trial (U.S. vs. Kurt Andrae, et al. File number 000-50-37) is on record in the National Records Center, Suitland, Md. Record Group (RG) 338, Vol. 86, (Dec. 23, 1947), pp. 7723-7769. It is also on microfilm at the National Archives, Washington, DC. RG 338, Roll 11, 1079/ 7723-7769.

1. Probably "attempt."
2. Top U.S. officials, including Franklin Roosevelt and Dwight Eisenhower, did refer to the American wartime camps for Japanese-Americans as "concentration camps." See: Michi Weglyn, *Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps* (New York: 1976), pp. 74, 114, 175, 217, 314, 316.
3. Possibly should be Stephen Pinter. He considered the story of six million exterminated Jews to be a myth. See Arthur Butz, *Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, p. 47.
4. Probably "savored."
5. Probably "corporal."

6. Probably "mistake."
7. Probably "wary."
8. Apparently a reference to "Prominente," or well-known individuals who were held in custody in the concentration camps, generally under privileged circumstances.
9. "Greens" were ordinary criminals. "Reds" were political prisoners, mostly Communists. These designations referred to the colored indentification badges they were obliged to wear in the camps. "Greens" and "Reds" struggled for internal control of the camps. By the final year of the war, Communist ("Red") inmates had wrested from the SS complete mastery of the day-to-day internal operations of several of the most important concentration camps.
10. SS Obergruppenführer Oswald Pohl was head of the SS-Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungshauptamt (WVHA) (Economic and Administrative Main Office of the SS), to which the inspectorate of the concentration camps was transferred in 1942. Despite Pohl's efforts to ameliorate prisoner conditions and to minimize deaths, above all in the interests of wartime production, he was convicted by an American military tribunal and hanged in 1951.
11. SS Gruppenführer Hans Kammler, head of Amtsgruppe C, the construction department of the WHVA, was in charge of the entire V-2 development and production program. Albin Sawatzki was Arthur Rudolph's superior at the "Mittelwerk."
12. Probably "ministry."
13. Perhaps "which are" instead of "the."
14. Usually "Kapo." Although the origin of the term is disputed, it was generally used to describe prisoners who were appointed by the German camp command to supervise prisoner labor, and often extended to other members of the official prisoner hierarchy.
15. Frère Birin's testimony is dealt with at length by Paul Rassinier, who knew him at Dora/Nordhausen, in *The Holocaust Story and the Lies of Ulysses*, pp. 121-129 (available from IHR for $12.00).
16. The notorious incident at Gardelegen, in which several hundred concentration camp inmates being evacuated from Nordhausen were locked in a barn and burned to death, had been presented by the prosecution as the deed of defendants Ulbricht and Brauny, but the defense was able to show that they had not been involved. The massacre was evidently carried out by members of the *Volkssturm*, the wartime militia,

at the order of a local party official. Claims by the prosecution and by later writers that the atrocity had been in response to an alleged order by Heinrich Himmler to liquidate all concentration camp inmates on the approach of the Allied armies have never been substantiated. As with a presumed Hitler order to exterminate the Jews and an alleged Himmler order in 1944 to stop the extermination program, no such Himmler liquidation order has ever been found.

17. Perhaps "all the..." instead of "only."
18. Boelke Kaserne, a sub-camp of Nordhausen, was bombed by Allied planes in April 1945, killing several hundred prisoners who worked in a munitions factory.
19. Probably "brief."
20. Probably "before."
21. Probably "repeat."
22. See note 20.

continued from page 66

at the Nordhausen-Dora concentration camp complex. Major Leon Poullada's informed, thoughtful, yet impassioned plea to the American officers who sat in judgement on the case in Dachau is noteworthy not merely for its impressive marshalling, just two years after the war, of arguments and insights which even the most informed Revisionist can profit from today, but also for its evidence that an American officer of unquestioned patriotism and probity made a case for which, in its essence, men and women of good will are being witch-hunted and scape-goated in Europe and America today, nearly 45 years later.

Frequent *JHR* contributor Bill Grimstad, a practiced journalist and long-time observer and connoisseur of the outlandish and inexplicable, from flying saucers to Zionism, considers a new look at the "occult roots of Nazism," and gives it qualified approval. Here at last, it seems, is an author, Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, who, despite his own "metaphysical" leanings and reflex anti-Hitlerism, does a measure of justice to the Führer's alleged "Ariosophist" influences and who leaves the "Spear of Destiny" to molder in the impotent obscurity to which he properly consigns it.

We wish to apologize to our subscribers for the belatedness of this issue of *The Journal*, which is due in some part to an imminent trial, occasioned by the complaint of Mel Mermelstein, who claims to have proved the Holocaust took place and has found a second judge to decree that event need not have been proved at all: it is simply beyond dispute. Nevertheless, we at IHR are confident, resolute, and determined to combat this renewed attempt to torpedo historical dissent to the best of our ability. Despite the approaching trial, we promise to be back on schedule this summer.

—Theodore J. O'Keefe

Book Review

THE OCCULT ROOTS OF NAZISM by Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke. Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, U.K.: Aquarian Press, 1985. Hardbound, 293 pages, illustrations, $23.50, ISBN 0-85030-402-4.

Reviewed by William Grimstad

Although the gas chamber mythos has been the centerpiece of ongoing Establishment efforts to diabolize the Third Reich, there has been a parallel attempt to remove that epoch from objective consideration by casting it in a less homicidal but more bizarrely demoniacal light. Linking National Socialism to occultism has served several purposes: making the Hitler period look spooky, or at least a bit "kooky"; alienating people of traditional religious outlook, and not least, cashing in on the lucrative bookselling fad of recent years sometimes called the "occult explosion."

Such books as *The Morning of the Magicians* or *The Occult and the Third Reich* first broached the notion that the National Socialist era, in addition to its multifarious other evils, had actually been conjured up by wicked wirepullers behind the visible leaders. We were introduced to the enigmatic figures of Rudolf von Sebottendorf and other supposed adepts of the fabled Thule Society, which now have become household words among even casual students of the period; and behind them an earlier strain of philosophers who, shockingly enough, had erected a religious worldview upon "Aryan" racialism.

Conveniently, the German regime's avowed pro-Aryan policies now could be faulted not only as leading to the Holocaust. They also became the butt of ridicule for travestying science or of opprobrium for trying to harness powers of evil. Still better, the always awkward fact of broad electoral support for the National Socialist program in one of the world's most advanced countries likewise could be explained: an entire nation had been mesmerized by baleful cultic Svengalis.

Goodrick-Clarke's book was published several years ago in England, but has begun finding its way into the book trade here. As it represents a substantial research effort, one naturally wonders about the author's inclinations. Little

biographical information is furnished, but the acknowledgements do contain a couple of names of interest. The first one thanked is Ellic Howe, a leading personality within the United Grand Lodge of England, reputedly the world's predominant Masonic organization. Howe writes frequently in *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, the controlled-circulation research journal of the lodge, whose enmity to National Socialism is glaring.

The author next salutes Norman Cohn, the British Holocaustorian who has made a career of microscopically analyzing the sensational *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* as a literary impetus for the later Holocaust. On the strength of such thinly veiled pro-Zionist essays as his *Warrant for Genocide*, Cohn worked his way to the top of the historical hierarchy at Oxford, and there supervised Goodrick-Clarke's studies, where the present volume began as a Ph.D. thesis.

Revisionists may raise eyebrows at such auspices, but my impression is that Goodrick-Clarke generally avoids the tendentiousness of his mentors. Although marred by annoying knee-jerks and tics of minor residual bias, this remains a thorough and levelheaded inquiry into a topic severely mauled by hacks. It also offers, for the first time known to me in English, a window into the amazingly extensive and frankly quite fascinating German nationalist literature of the period.

His subtitle, "The Ariosophists of Austria and Germany, 1890-1935," refers to a body of ideas which once had a substantial following in the German-speaking world. The ideas centered on the writings of two Austrians, Guido von List (1848-1919) and Jörg Lanz von Liebenfels (1874-1954). Ariosophy is used by the author as a generic for this "lore of the Aryans" that was expounded by the two men.

Guido von List (the aristocratic *von* was self-assumed) was raised a Catholic but early took interest in Nordic paganism, which he coupled with a profound attraction to nature. An ardent rebel against modernity, which he associated with the spreading metropolis of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna and all its decadent ways, List's happiest moments came on rambles through the Austrian countryside, and he began his literary career with newspaper pieces on the rural scene, depicted as highly spiritualized. He was concerned to furnish an ideological backdrop to the pan-German movement led by such nationalist politicians as Georg von Schönerer and Vienna Mayor Karl Lueger.

Later, List worked out what was essentially a clairvoyant reconstruction of the distant past, elaborating a vast mythology of an ancient Wotanist priesthood, the *Armanenschaft.* They supposedly held sway in Europe until the Christian conversion, but now were confined to clandestine status, perpetuating the ancient Aryan lore through a small élite, among whom he numbered himself.

Eventually, List built up a fairly wide readership and a Guido von List Society, sponsored by prestigious people, was established. With the coming of the First World War, the appeal of such a philosophy grew greatly, especially in Germany, and List also found a wider field for analysis of the destructive elements arrayed against the Central Powers. He dubbed these the Great International Party, in a fair anticipation of the World Zionist Organizations and Trilateral Commissions of our own day.

Adolf Josef Lanz also was born in Vienna, of middle-class Catholic parents. Like List, he assumed an aristocratic pedigree and the pompous Jörg Lanz von Liebenfels moniker, although his claim to this title was never disproven. He was inspired by List and became one of the older guru's early backers, but Lanz's Ariosophical interests were different. As a young man he had entered a Cistercian abbey as a novice monk, and although he left after a time, he remained enthralled by medieval Catholicism.

Lanz was disinterested in Listian oracular recreations of the German past, but he did have his own candidate for an ancient Aryan secret priesthood that supposedly had survivors in the modern era: the Knights Templar, a Catholic order suppressed for heresy in the 1300s. He founded his *Ordo Novi Templi* (Order of the New Temple) around 1907 in the medieval castle of Burg Werfenstein, which perched dramatically above the Danube with a swastika and *fleur-de-lis* flag over its tower. Goodrick-Clarke is much perturbed at the racialist slant of this literature. Actually, such material was commonplace in many Western countries at that time: imperial Britain had its "white man's burden" ethic purveyed to a huge audience by poet Rudyard Kipling; and here in America, anthropologist Lothrop Stoddard could publish a best-selling book entitled *The Rising Tide of Color.*

As the author's exhaustive analysis, if not his own conclusions, makes clear, however, Ariosophy played only a

very incidental role in the rise of National Socialism. Although Hitler may have known of List, there is no proof of it, and only an indication that he had read Lanz's *Ostara* magazine as a young man. He was not impressed, to judge by his ridicule of "*völkisch* wandering scholars" and antiquarian cultists in *Mein Kampf*.

Of far greater import in the political arena was Baron Rudolf von Sebottendorf von der Rose (born Adam Alfred Rudolf Glauer in 1875), although his role too has been distorted. Goodrick-Clarke has done an excellent job of analyzing the available material on this colorful international adventurer. Once again, however, Sebottendorf's involvement with Freemasonry, Muslim dervishes and the Turkish revolution cannot be convincingly tied to his pan-Germanism, except that they may have predisposed him to backstage activism. What he does deserve credit for is having the political savvy, virtually alone among a welter of confused nationalists and anti-Communists in southern Bavaria, to see what was needed in Germany and the conviction to stake his personal resources on that.

After joining the moribund *Germanenorden* in 1916, Sebottendorf quickly revived the Bavarian section and began using the nominal cultural society as a center for political action during the brewing Marxist revolution, adopting the Thule Society name as a "cover" to divert Red suspicions. He purchased the *Beobachter* newspaper (later the National Socialists' *Völkischer Beobachter*); stockpiled weapons; schemed to kidnap the Communist leader, Kurt Eisner; infiltrated spies into the Communist cadres, and organized the *Kampfbund Thule* paramilitary group which joined with other Free Corps units in the successful attack on Munich's Communist government on April 30, 1919.

Most important, of course, was Sebottendorf's recognition of the need for a new type of worker-based party to deal with the unprecedented Red threat. He founded the German Workers Union in 1918, the most active member of which was Anton Drexler, who went on to start the German Workers Party, which was joined, taken over, and renamed the National Socialist German Workers' Party by Adolf Hitler in 1919.

Meanwhile, Sebottendorf's political career ended abruptly that same year, when Communists seized seven Thule Society

members and executed them on April 30, triggering international outrage and at last galvanizing the Munich citizenry to aid in ousting the Marxists. Sebottendorf was blamed for having allowed the Thule membership list to fall into the Reds' hands, although there were those who suggested that this was his Machiavellian intent all along, as the ensuing creation of martyrs played a key role in the nationalist victory.

In any case, Rudolf von Sebottendorf was in no way a puppet-master of the much later Third Reich, which indeed treated him with some hostility. Rather, he was an unusually shrewd political operative at a critical formative period, whose personal courage kept him battling in Red Munich long after many others had retreated. One wonders exactly what situation would have awaited the inexperienced Hitler had Sebottendorf not laid this groundwork.

* * * * *

Anyone trying to arrive at a rational understanding of this important period has been painfully aware of the jabberwock literature that has held the floor since the Second World War, ranging from popular novels through journalistic exposés to solemn histories, and treating of everything from "Holocaust studies" through postwar "Nazi war criminal" skullduggeries.

Although it may seem extreme to link a Lucy Dawidowicz with the latest Hitler-is-alive tabloid tale, the fact is that they are on a continuum of literature which enforces a Manichean, total-evil view of the National Socialist era, from the academic down to the comic-book levels, a peculiar situation that does not exist in any other known area of inquiry.

Moreover, it is not that the literary establishment simply neglects to repudiate this trashier output. In fact, it has actively promoted it. The books in question are published by major houses, and get conventional review and promotional attention. Such a state of affairs would never exist in regard to sensationalized titles critical of Israeli Zionism, for example. Clearly, then, a Revisionist laying to rest of this material is long overdue; the present book, despite its lacks, is a start.

Goodrick-Clarke traces the origin of the Lovecraftian school of Third Reich historiography to the self-proclaimed German rocket engineer, Willy Ley, who emigrated here in 1935 and spent the ensuing years working on Hollywood science fiction films. In 1947, Ley wrote an article for a "pulp" fantasy

magazine ridiculing pseudoscience in Germany, which he claimed included a Berlin sect attempting to conjure up the mysterious *vril* force described by British novelist Edward Bulwer-Lytton in his *The Coming Race* (1871), supposedly conveying to its adepts total power over the world.

This was sufficient to spark off, in 1960, the first and probably most enduring of the genre, *The Morning of the Magicians* by French journalists Louis Pauwels and Jacques Bergier. A vast farrago of misquotations, sheer fabrications and exclamation points, this opus touched base on the major points that were to become standard for the type:

- The rise and early success of National Socialism were due, not to sober choice by the German electorate, followed by hard work of a capable people, but to supernatural forces;
- The forces are described as either discarnate, like Bulwer's *vril*, or as the doings of godlike "ascended masters" in some remote and exotic location, usually Tibet;
- It is possible to get into contact with this power, identified by Pauwels and Bergier as "the Master of the World or the King of Fear," and as it were plug in on the current for one's own ends in the mundane world;
- Such liaison was a top-priority project of the German government, despite its other distractions;
- The government's channel was the Thule Society, which in turn was the creature of the two evil geniuses, the playwright and early Hitler friend, Dietrich Eckart, and a professor of geopolitics at the University of Munich, Dr. Karl Haushofer. They used the Thule Society to control the state through Hitler, who is invariably described in the canon as a semihysterical "mediumistic" personality.

Later savants, such as Dietrich Bronder in his *Before Hitler Came* (1964), with its title rather crassly lifted from Sebottendorf's 1933 memoir, introduced the Ariosophical dimension of List and Lanz, including the pair in the Thule clique, along with Hitler, Mussolini, Göring and a who's who of Axis luminaries. With this, the menu was complete and numerous others could begin rehashing it, most notably Michel-Jean Angebert, *The Occult and the Third Reich* (1971);

Trevor Ravenscroft, *The Spear of Destiny* (1972), and J.H. Brennan, *Occult Reich* (1974).

Placing his magnifying glass on the "MOM" genre, Goodrick-Clarke reports as follows:

- There was no Vril Society or "Luminous Lodge," as the fabulists call it, although there was a "Lumenclub" in Vienna for some years after 1932, acting as a front for the banned National Socialist Party;
- Prof. Haushofer did endorse a thrust to the east, into Soviet territory, but strictly for obvious geopolitical reasons; his alleged goal of reaching the ascended masters in the Orient is "entirely false," according to Goodrick-Clarke;
- Dietrich Eckart (who died in 1923), along with the young Alfred Rosenberg, attended a few early Thule meetings as guests but there is no evidence linking other Party leaders, or List, Lanz or Haushofer, with the group;
- The Thule Society was disbanded around 1925 because of declining membership and was never reorganized.

We certainly owe something to Goodrick-Clarke for so expertly skewering this pernicious nonsense, which has even tripped up major-league historians like Joachim Fest, although he does not follow through on the truly important question. The inimitable Holocaust, spotlighted by all these "schlock" authors as the result of the national demonic posession, still sits enshrined in its increasingly shopworn hideousness, even here.

About the Contributors

ROBERT FAURISSON'S status as (tenured) Professor of French Literature at the University of Lyon-2 in France has, at this writing, been overturned by bureaucratic fiat, a procedure unknown in France since the German occupation. Professor Faurisson specializes in the appraisal and evaluation of texts and documents. A frequent contributor to *The Journal of Historical Review*, Professor Faurisson has published numerous articles and books, including *Is the Diary of Anne Frank Genuine?* and *Réponse à Pierre Vidal-Naquet.* His forthcoming collection, *Faurisson on the Holocaust*, will be available from the IHR this year.

WILLIAM GRIMSTAD, a professional journalist, has written for four major American newspapers, and been editor of *Georgetown Today*, the official magazine of Georgetown University. His two books, *Anti-Zion* and *Six Million Reconsidered*, often regarded as classics in the field, are available from IHR.

LEON B. POULLADA was born in New Mexico in 1913. He was graduated from San Diego State University (B.A.) in 1936 and earned the LL.B. at Southwestern University in Los Angeles (1940). From 1939 to 1948 he served in the United States Army, rising to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. A fluent speaker of Spanish and French who traveled widely throughout Latin America, Leon Poullada died in 1987.

JOHN TOLAND is one of the world's best known and most widely read historians. His works of history include *Battle: The Story of the Bulge, But Not in Shame, The Last One Hundred Days, No Man's Land, The Rising Sun, Adolf Hitler* and *Infamy.* Several of his books have been highly acclaimed best-sellers. Among his numerous honors, Mr. Toland was awarded the 1971 Pulitzer prize for general non-fiction. He lives in Danbury, Connecticut, with his wife and collaborator, Toshiko.

Coming May 30th

INGRID WECKERT

FLASH POINT

Kristallnacht 1938

Instigators, Victims and Beneficiaries

ON THE NIGHT OF NOVEMBER 9-10, 1938, hoodlums attacked synagogues and Jewish businesses throughout Germany in an outburst of violence and destruction known as the "Kristallnacht" ("Crystal Night"), named for the broken glass of shattered storefront windows.

Was this the first step on the path to the "Final Solution"? What caused this outrage? Who bears the responsibility?

In this provocative, eye-opening work, author Ingrid Weckert cuts through the cloud of emotion and rhetoric that still surrounds this issue. Carefully reconstructing what *actually* happened from primary sources, she sheds new light on the crucially important but systematically suppressed historical background to that fateful night.

Solidly written and referenced, ***Flashpoint*** nevertheless reads like a gripping mystery story. No open-minded reader will fail to view the roles of the main actors—from Hitler and Goebbels to assassin Herschel Grynszpan and his shadowy backers—in this notorious episode through new eyes.

Flashpoint: *Kristallnacht* 1938, by Ingrid Weckert

Paperback • 180 pages • Index • $15.95

Available May 30th from Institute for Historical Review